

Mounting Pressure on South Africa to Withdraw Troops From Angola

Juan Carlos Clamps Down on Strikes



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Entrevista con Hugo Blanco

NEWS ANALYSIS

The UN Debate on Palestine

By David Frankel

From January 12 to 26, the United Nations Security Council debated the conflict between Israel and the Arabs. The participation of the Palestine Liberation Organization in that debate was an important victory. It was a new blow to the Israeli colonial settler-state, which is more isolated than ever.

The Israeli regime responded by boycotting the debate, but this did nothing to relieve the growing pressure that was reflected in the 11-to-1 vote in favor of seating the PLO delegation. The mood in Israel after the PLO was invited to take part in the session was summed up by Chagai Eshed. He said in the December 5 issue of *Davar*, the daily of the ruling Labor party, that "Israel is in a political and military trap."

Eshed argued, "It can already be seen that within a short period Israel will turn from a boycotting state into a boycotted state. The number of states that recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people already exceeds the number of states that maintain diplomatic relations with Israel."

In accordance with its policy of seeking to exploit new economic and political openings in the Arab world, the Ford administration tried to keep its defense of Israel low-keyed. In a January 19 speech, U.S. Ambassador Daniel Moynihan reiterated Washington's support for the earlier Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, which make no mention of the Palestinian people or their rights, referring only to the "refugee problem."

Moynihan's speech, reportedly written in Washington and approved by Kissinger, lacked the "combative tone" of his earlier speeches, according to the report in the January 20 *New York Times*.

However, the mailed fist was not absent from the U.S. imperialist effort on behalf of Israel. Just three days before the debate opened the *New York Times* ran a front-page story, based on leaks from the State Department, describing how the Ford administration was linking votes at the United Nations on such questions as Zionism to cutbacks in U.S. aid programs.

Israeli officials were more direct in their threats, hinting openly at the possibility that they may try to resolve their current political difficulties by unleashing a new war. "Serious developments might result"

from the Security Council debate, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin warned January 4. He added that Israel had "sufficient military strength to provide it with room for political maneuver, but possibly we will have to give expression to this sooner than many think."

Chaim Herzog, Israel's chief ambassador to the United Nations, echoed Rabin's threat January 12, characterizing the debate in the Security Council "as a preparatory arena for a future war," and warning against a "downward rush to disaster."

Zionist groups in the New York area also gave their response to the appearance of the PLO at the United Nations. The opening day of the debate was marked by the discovery of three pipe bombs at the United Nations and two at the Iraqi mission to the United Nations.

But the tenacious struggle of the Palestinian people for their right to self-determination cannot be deterred by such threats and thuggery. The simple truth is that a whole people has been expelled from its homeland in order to make way for Israel, and this fact has begun to penetrate the consciousness of the masses all over the world. That is what is behind Israel's increasing diplomatic difficulties. Every time Palestinians are enabled to appear and state their case before an international audience, it is a blow to the racist settler-state that has driven them out and now attempts to deny their rights as a people.

The attitude of the imperialists toward the Palestinians was reflected in Security Council Resolution 242, which was passed after the 1967 Middle East war and reaffirmed after the 1973 war by resolution 338. This resolution listed the "refugee problem" as a subpoint after the necessity of "guaranteeing freedom of navigation through international waterways in the area."

While Washington insists that any new Security Council resolution on the Middle East be limited to the mention of Palestinian "interests" as opposed to rights, even its closest imperialist allies in Western Europe and Japan have found this position untenable. On January 15, for example, British Ambassador Ivor Richard said that the "right of the Palestinian people to the expression of their national identity must also be recognized."

As this slippery formula indicates, the European imperialists are far from ready to spell out in detail what they mean by

Palestinian "rights." However, one thing is clear: All the imperialist powers; the Soviet bureaucrats; and the Egyptian, Syrian, and Jordanian regimes are agreed that the Palestinians must accept the Israeli state within "secure and recognized boundaries." This point has been reiterated in the proposals for a new Security Council resolution to replace 242 and 338.

There are obviously tremendous pressures on the PLO to give up its demand for a single state in Palestine in which both Arabs and Jews would live together. So far it has resisted this pressure and not abandoned its demand for a democratic, secular Palestine, although there have been numerous well-publicized equivocations by PLO leaders.

What is at issue here is the very essence of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination. Colonial settlers do not have the right to seize the land of another people—either all of it or part of it—and set up their own state. That was the principle that was violated by the UN vote to partition Palestine in 1947, and that is the principle that is violated by those who call for the recognition of the Israeli oppressor state today.

This is not simply an abstract question of principle. As an imperialist country in its own right as well as a client of U.S. imperialism, Israel will continue to act as a military spearhead against the Arab revolution for as long as it exists. As a racist settler-state, Israel will also continue to oppress the Palestinians. And just like the white settler-states in southern Africa, Israel will continually be involved in aggression beyond its borders in order to maintain its existence.

Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the PLO's delegation to the United Nations, said in the January 22 *New York Times*, "Since 1948, the United Nations has passed innumerable resolutions reaffirming the rights of the Palestinians to return to their homes and property. The implementation of these resolutions has been impeded by the unilateral action of the Zionists who intend to increase and consolidate European Jewish settlements on Arab lands."

The conflict in the Middle East began with the invasion of Zionist settlers determined to build a Jewish state in an Arab land. It will end only when the Israeli Jews agree to live there together with the Palestinians, not at their expense. □

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Hands Off Sahara!

On January 12 the last Spanish soldier left Sahara, effectively ending ninety-two years of Spanish colonial rule over the country's 70,000 inhabitants. The remaining Spanish administrators are scheduled to depart February 28.

The Madrid regime was under pressure from a number of sources to withdraw. The United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, and the World Court had publicly stated in preceding months their support to the Saharans' right to self-determination. Morocco was threatening to take over Sahara on the basis of an old dynastic claim. At the same time, Spain's internal crisis was deepening as Franco lay at death's door, and the cost of a colonial war was judged too risky for the shaky dictatorship.

In November 1975, Madrid signed a pact with the governments of Morocco and Mauritania, partitioning Sahara between the two powers.

Now Moroccan and Mauritanian troops have forcibly moved into Sahara, and King Hassan II of Morocco has asked Washington for new military equipment and increased training. In reporting his request, the American press has frequently cited Soviet aid to the Algerian government, which has called for independence for the Saharans and provided some aid to the main Saharan liberation group—the Frente Polisario.

Behind the saber rattling lies the question of control over Saharan phosphate deposits—the largest in the world. Part of the deal between Morocco, Mauritania, and Spain guarantees that all three powers will share in the profits. Morocco has already opened negotiations with several American-owned multinationals, including the Rockefeller interests, for development of the deposits.

The only ones not consulted in all this are the inhabitants of Sahara. Caught in the middle of the power play, more than 40,000 of them have fled the cities as Moroccan and Mauritanian troops advanced. They now live in refugee camps in Algeria and are reported to be extremely weakened by lack of food.

Persons suspected of supporting an independent Sahara have been jailed, tortured, and in several cases killed as "separatists" by Moroccan authorities. Entire tribes have been driven out of the country to be jailed on Moroccan territory.

Persistent reports of demonstrations and forceful resistance to the carving up of their country show that the overwhelming majority of Saharans favor independence. Their right to self-determination must be respected.

Hands off Sahara!

February 2, 1976

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South Africa Under Mounting Pressure to Withdraw Troops

By Steve Clark

A number of dispatches from southern Africa report that South Africa is withdrawing troops from their positions along battlefronts in south-central Angola.

New York Times correspondent Henry Kamm, in a January 25 dispatch from Kinshasa, Zaïre, reported, "South African troops are withdrawing from frontline positions across the center of Angola, a well-placed official of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola [UNITA—União Nacional para Independência Total de Angola] disclosed here today."

But the South African imperialists were quick to make clear that despite mounting pressure, they had no intention of withdrawing completely from Angola. According to a dispatch from Capetown in the January 26 *New York Post*, "Defense Minister Pieter Botha said today South African troops would stay in southern Angola until South Africa received a guarantee that the South West Africa border was safe."

New York Times correspondent Kamm's dispatch from Kinshasa cited the UNITA official as saying that South Africa was leaving behind for UNITA forces "important items of matériel, such as artillery pieces and communications equipment."

Kamm continued, "The official said the National Union had been given to understand by foreign quarters that support the pro-Western movement that the withdrawal was a move to encourage a similar retreat on the part of the Cuban military units spearheading the forces of the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola [MPLA]."

According to Kamm, the official "declined to say what foreign sources had informed his organization of the expectation of a Cuban withdrawal, but suggested it might have been American."

There was mounting speculation in the press about a possible South African pullback throughout the week prior to the January 25 reports.

On January 24 Botha told the press, "I have on various occasions stated that South Africa's involvement in Angola is part of the involvement of the free world. But I also stated that South Africa is not prepared to fight on behalf of the free world alone."

Botha made the comment in response to a statement by UNITA Foreign Minister Jorge Sangumba in Lusaka, Zambia, that South African troops were withdrawing

from Angola on Pretoria's orders.

Washington Post correspondent Denis Herbstein pointed to some of the pressures bearing down on Pretoria as a result of its Angola involvement. Herbstein reported from Johannesburg January 24, "Now, at least, white South Africans are hoping that they will be spared further scenes of tearful parents waving farewell to their teen-age sons going off to war, the regular funeral of young men in towns and villages throughout the country, and the sight of manacled South African prisoners being carted around the continent."

A report in the January 24 British *Economist* noted the growing unpopularity inside South Africa of the war, despite government attempts through censorship to shield the population from news of the conflict. "Casualties could be high and public opinion in South Africa, already showing signs of nervousness, could become positively hostile," the report said.

Nonetheless, Washington's moves will play the pivotal role in determining the extent and character of Pretoria's involvement. *Washington Post* correspondent Herbstein's January 24 dispatch pointed out, "Botha clearly blames the Western powers, and particularly the United States, for not helping South Africa and its Angolan allies to match the weaponry of the Soviet backed Popular Movement."

This highlights the importance of continued protests in the United States and around the world against the Ford administration's role in masterminding the imperialist intervention. With Kissinger now back from his talks in Moscow with Soviet Premier Leonid Brezhnev, both the Senate and House will be considering measures to restrict American funds for use in Angola.

If reports of Pretoria's withdrawal from the battlefronts are true, it is highly unlikely that they signify an end to South African involvement in Angola. Kamm reported in his January 25 dispatch, "The [UNITA] official said that the South African troops were not leaving Angola but were remaining on alert in 'nonoperational areas.'"

As Botha indicated, Pretoria will almost certainly retain a firm foothold along Angola's border with Namibia. Its interests in this area are twofold.

First, Pretoria wants to protect the \$200 million Cunene hydroelectric dam project, which it began to construct before the downfall of the Salazarist dictatorship in

Portugal. Second, it intends to continue its operations on both sides of the border against guerrillas of the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO), which is fighting to sever South African control over Namibia.

With troops amassed along the Angolan border, South Africa could reintervene in the fighting at any point.

Inside Angola, the Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA—People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola) continues to hold the offensive in the civil war—reportedly with heavy support from Cuban troops.

In the northwestern region of Angola, the MPLA has held on to the towns of Uíge, Abriz, Abrezete, and others, where during the past month it has driven back forces of the Frente Nacional de Libertação de Angola (FNLA—Angolan National Liberation Front).

FNLA troops have been pushed steadily north toward Angola's border with Zaïre. According to Johnny Eduardo, an FNLA leader and copremier of the Democratic Republic of Angola established jointly by the FNLA and UNITA, his organization still held the northern Angolan towns of Santo António do Zaïre and São Salvador as of January 24.

According to a January 24 dispatch from *New York Times* correspondent Kamm, Eduardo also "accused the United States today of failing to establish a diplomatic or military balance in the struggle for the former Portuguese colony and of harming his coalition."

"Whenever they [Ford and Kissinger] bang their fists on the table against our enemies," Kamm quotes Eduardo as saying, "the Russians take them seriously and increase military aid to the M.P.L.A. The Americans don't match this by aid to us."

Eduardo bitterly denied that the FNLA is collapsing, as Kissinger reportedly informed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in mid-January. "I replied to Kissinger," Eduardo said, "there is no collapse. If we lost a few towns and places in the conventional war, we will regain them through guerrilla warfare."

Following the MPLA's gains in the north, military activity picked up along the southern battlefront, midway between Luanda, capital of the MPLA regime, and Huambo, capital of the FNLA-UNITA regime. South-central Angola is the stronghold of the UNITA, which is based among

the Ovimbundu people of that region.

"Unita's fear is that the Popular Movement will now bring its northern forces down to the southern battlegrounds, including the Soviet tanks and batteries of 122-mm rocket launchers which terrified [FNLA leader Holden] Roberto's soldiers into headlong flight in the north," said a report in the January 24 *Economist*.

The MPLA and UNITA are contending for control of the strategic Benguela railway line that links Zaïre to the Atlantic harbor at Lobito. January 20 dispatches by both Associated Press and United Press International reported that the MPLA had been unsuccessful in capturing the town of Cela, about 100 miles north of Huambo. Huambo is located on the Benguela rail line.

By January 23, however, the MPLA reported that it had taken not only Cela, but the coastal town of Novo Redondo, not far from Lobito. The UNITA, which currently holds most of the Benguela line, denied the MPLA claims, although UNITA leader Ruben Chitacumbi admitted to Kamm that the situation around those cities was "very, very difficult." (*New York Times*, January 26.)

According to Kamm, Chitacumbi also "said Cuban and M.P.L.A. forces had been driven from the railhead town of Teixeira de Sousa but the town had not been occupied by forces of the union because the bridges east and west of the town had been blown up. . . ." Teixeira de Sousa has been the only major town on the Benguela line held by the MPLA.

Earlier in the week, UNITA leader Jonas Savimbi announced that his forces plan to airlift 5,000 soldiers to the northern battlefield to aid FNLA troops, who Savimbi said were suffering from low morale after their recent defeats.

FNLA leader Eduardo said his organization will accept the offer of support, but that the UNITA reinforcements should have been sent much earlier. According to a January 24 dispatch by Kamm, Eduardo also "ridiculed statements by Dr. Savimbi that National Union troops were needed to raise the morale of the National Front forces."

A dispatch by Kamm several days earlier indicated some of the problems facing the UNITA itself.

The half of Angola held by UNITA, Kamm said in a January 21 dispatch from Huambo, is "virtually cut off from the world, producing almost nothing and consuming the fruits of its past labor." It "appears to be heading from crisis toward catastrophe," he said.

"The plantation agriculture, mineral extraction and light manufacturing plants of the former Portuguese colony have been paralyzed by the exodus of the settlers who owned or operated them. . . ."



Lou Howort/Militant

500 persons marched in New York January 17 to protest U.S. intervention in Angola. As Congress reconvened two days later, 300 rallied in Washington calling for fund cutoff. Picket lines and other actions were also held in Cleveland, Chicago, St. Louis, Los Angeles, and Pasadena.

"Whatever foreign exchange Angola possessed at independence last Nov. 11 was in the hands of the Popular Movement, based in Luanda, the colonial capital and center of banking."

Kamm described the severe shortage of gasoline and other petroleum products; the lack of adequate food and medical supplies in Huambo; the total breakdown of the city water supply; the paralysis of the postal service and internal transportation throughout the area; and the lack of communication with the outside world, since all telephone, telegraph, and telex lines are centered not in Huambo, but in Luanda.

"Although Huambo is the capital of Mr. Savimbi's government," Kamm reported, "there is no evidence of a functioning government." The UNITA's military headquarters is not in Huambo, but in nearby Silva Porto.

Coming on top of the FNLA's reverses, such a picture of the UNITA-held territories could strengthen the hand of those in Washington who believe—as cold-war liberal Hubert Humphrey recently put it—"In fact, we are supporting two political factions about which we know nothing. . . . which have the least chance to achieve a military victory."

These ruling-class circles fear that American economic and political interests may suffer unless a quick policy shift is around the corner.

Reflecting this concern, Mark Moran—a top aide to California Senator John Tunney—visited Luanda for several days beginning January 22 to meet with top

MPLA officials. Another Tunney aide met during the same period with leaders of the FNLA.

"The American [Moran] says his conversations here have been very 'useful,' and that they involved to a great extent the suspended oil-extracting operations of the Gulf Company in Cabinda, and the sale of Boeing aircraft to the Luanda government, which has reportedly been blocked by State Department pressure," *New York Times* correspondent Michael Kaufman reported from Luanda January 23.

The overtures have not all been in one direction, according to Kaufman. ". . . there seems to be less anti-American sentiment in newspaper and radio reports, coinciding with the current visit here of Mark Moran. . . ." he reported.

"Officials of the Popular Movement have sought to convey the impression that there is at least one element in the Luanda government that fears that a lack of flexibility in Washington can lead only to increased Soviet influence in Angola. . . ."

"These officials say that they recognize that to a great extent the wealth of Angola—its oil, its diamonds, its coffee—is dependent on Western markets."

Some of these overtures are coming from MPLA leader Agostinho Neto himself, according to a dispatch from Kaufman January 22. "Dr. Neto and other leaders here have in their public statements developed an approach to the United States in which Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger and his Angolan policies are depicted as advancing imperialist designs while the Senate and to some extent American

companies that have holdings here are carefully praised."

Meanwhile, in the wake of the Organization of African Unity's failure to reach an agreement on Angola, there was widespread speculation in the world press that several African nations are themselves seeking to hammer out a "compromise solution."

A report in the January 24 *Economist* summarized the broad outlines of the proposal that has generated the most speculation. "This calls for the formation of a two-party coalition government," the report said, "the stronger partner in which would be the Popular Movement under its leader, Agostinho Neto, but which would include representatives of the third Angolan nationalist group, Unita. Mr. Holden

Roberto's National Front, long an implacable enemy of the Popular Movement, now holds only a fringe of territory on the Zaïre border, and would therefore be excluded."

According to some press reports, Savimbi has done little to halt talk of such a proposal. In a January 21 dispatch from Huambo, Kamm quoted him as saying, "Neto is 60 and thinks he should be President. Let him be President. I am 40 and can wait."

Kamm said that another UNITA leader, Miguel Nzau Puna, stated the group's willingness to accept a "compromise in which the National Union would be acknowledged as the most popular force in Southern Angola," while the MPLA would remain the dominant force in Luanda, the capital. □

While the Spanish monarchy is attempting to impose a wage freeze and curb mounting demands for democratic rights, its foreign minister has been visiting West European capitals to trumpet the supposed liberalization of the regime. The Spanish capitalists badly want admission to the European Common Market, both for economic and political reasons.

"Spain applied for an association agreement with the EEC as early as 1962 and originally hoped for full membership by 1970," noted a report in the January 17 issue of the British *Economist*, "but all that had been achieved by last year was a start on talks about a trade agreement. . . . Now the new-look post-Franco Spain is looking for more than just a revival of those talks: it wants proper association, to be quickly followed by full EEC membership, along with membership of Nato."

According to the *Economist* article, "There is every prospect of the trade talks starting up again soon . . . but beyond that the EEC would want to see more evidence of Spanish democratisation before making a move."

In contrast to its European partners, the Ford administration exhibited little hesitation about establishing close links with the new Spanish government. On January 23, the Madrid regime reported that it had reached an accord with Washington on the continued operation of U.S. military bases in Spain.

The agreement, which will be submitted to the U.S. Senate and given full status as a "treaty" in order to underscore the ties between Madrid and Washington, calls for \$1.22 billion in military aid to the Spanish regime over the next five years. This compares with a \$500 to \$600 million figure that had been agreed upon with Franco just before he died.

In a calculated boost to the monarchy's hopes of being admitted to the NATO alliance, the treaty will note Madrid's contributions to that imperialist bloc. Henry Kissinger is scheduled to stop in Madrid January 24 to sign the agreement.

However, even in announcing the accord, Foreign Minister José María de Areilza had to make mention of the "unpopularity" of the U.S. bases in Spain. Residents of Palomares, for example, doubtlessly remember very well the 1966 incident in which a U.S. B-52 bomber collided with another plane, and four H-bombs were lost. Radioactive pollution from the bombs affected crops, soil, and people in the vicinity, and technicians had to ship 6,000 tons of polluted soil to the United States for disposal.

According to Areilza, the new pact provides for the removal of nuclear-armed submarines from the Rota naval base in southern Spain some time before the termination of the five-year agreement. □

72,000 Railway Workers Drafted

Spanish Monarchy Clamps Down

By David Frankel

To counter the wave of strikes and demonstrations that has erupted in Spain, the regime of King Juan Carlos I is resorting to further repressive measures.

Police moved in January 20 to smash a demonstration in Madrid that had been called by a wide range of opposition groups, including the pro-Moscow Communist party and the Social Democratic PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español—Spanish Socialist Workers party). The action had been initiated, according to the PSOE, "to support peacefully the just demands of wage-earners and to seek the right to democratic liberties."

Calling the demonstration "a clear attempt to disturb public order," the police clamped down hard. Thousands of riot police occupied the center of Madrid. According to a report by Henry Giniger in the January 21 *New York Times*, ". . . helmeted policemen with truncheons and automatic weapons sealed off the area and charged against people attempting to form into groups on its periphery. On foot, in jeeps and on horseback, they put on one of the biggest shows of force here in years."

The regime's display of force was clearly part of a general approach adopted in hopes of halting the working-class upsurge. On January 18, for example, police in the Basque city of Bilbao attacked thousands of demonstrators demanding amnesty for political prisoners and democratic rights, while in Madrid twenty-two lawyers connected with the labor movement were arrested.

The arrests took place at a private party at which thirty-three other persons were also taken into custody by plainclothesmen with submachine guns. Although those arrested were released the following day, club-swinging police beat 200 lawyers, economists, journalists, and architects who had gathered outside the police headquarters to request an explanation for the arrests.

On January 19 the government announced it was drafting 72,000 railway workers into the army in order to force them to work under military discipline. This strikebreaking tactic, frequently used by the fascist dictatorship when Franco was in power, follows the conscription of 55,000 postal workers.

Premier Carlos Arias Navarro, speaking to the fascist National Movement the same day, hailed the forty years of Franco's rule and vowed that "the Government is determined to use with energy and firmness all the means the law has put at its disposal."

So far, the repressive measures have not been successful in stopping the strike movement. "In Barcelona, Valencia, Zaragoza and Seville, labor agitation has increased," Giniger reported in a January 20 dispatch. "In the Barcelona area 69 companies are reported affected by work stoppages." On January 21, strikes closed down the coal mines of Asturias.

In the Madrid area, Giniger reported January 19, "when the Chrysler plant in Villaverde employing 12,000 reopened only a few workers appeared and these quickly left because of hostility from pickets."

Lebanese Accord Maintains Religious Quotas

By David Russell

A new cease-fire was agreed upon in Lebanon January 22. However, the truce between the warring factions is based on an attempt to patch up the antiquated and discriminatory system of religious quotas that led to the civil war in the first place. It is an attempt that is sure to break down in the end, bringing the danger of a general Middle East conflict once again to the fore.

The civil war in Lebanon has taken an estimated 9,500 lives during the past nine months and left about 20,000 persons wounded. In a country the size of the United States this would be the equivalent of about two million casualties.

During the latest fighting, Christian rightists overran the Beirut slum areas of Karantina and Maslakh. The neighborhoods were then bulldozed and put to the torch. The results of one massacre, in which thirteen men and one woman were murdered by the rightist forces, were shown January 20 on a CBS television news broadcast.

In a January 21 dispatch from Beirut, *New York Times* correspondent James Markham reported, "Wardah Zurarikat, a 35-year-old woman holding her weeping 11-year-old son at her side, said that right-wing gunmen had shot three of her brothers and four nephews before her eyes. . . ."

The families of those massacred—thousands of persons in all—were driven out of their homes. "It's just like what happened in Palestine," said one Palestinian, quoted by Markham, as he watched refugees being sheltered in a school.

The responsibility for the carnage and misery visited on the Lebanese people rests squarely on French and American imperialism.

France took over what is now Lebanon after World War I. In order to facilitate its domination of the area, it played off the Christian population against the Muslims, in much the same way that the British played off the Jews against the Arabs in Palestine. The Christians, originally a slight majority within the borders artificially carved out of Syria, were ensured a privileged position that persists to this day.

In a series of articles on Lebanon that appeared in the September 20-25 issues of the Paris daily *Le Monde*, Eric Rouleau explained that "Christians, who constitute about 40 percent of the Lebanese population, have only one-third to one-half the illiteracy rate of Muslims and account for



RABIN: Eyeing southern Lebanon.

the majority of the university graduates, businessmen, government functionaries and professionals. On the whole their standard of living is higher. . . ."

This social inequality is maintained and accentuated by a discriminatory political arrangement imposed by the French colonialists in 1943. The various Christian sects have been guaranteed a 6-to-5 majority over the Muslims in the Lebanese parliament and civil service. The most powerful post in the government, the presidency, has been reserved for a Maronite Christian, as has the post of army chief of staff.

This archaic system of religious stratification is doubly undemocratic. Not only does it discriminate on religious lines, but it also discriminates against what has become the majority of the country since the last census, taken in 1932. The Muslim majority deserves full support in its struggle to eliminate this discriminatory system, which was saved in 1958 only through the intervention of more than 14,000 U.S. troops.

The Muslim struggle for full democratic rights in Lebanon is given explosive power

by the situation of the masses. Rouleau describes the poverty:

Six hundred thousand people are crowded into the "belt of misery" which strangles Beirut and her suburbs. In the financial metropolis of the Middle East where banks crumble under the weight of uninvested cash liquidity, more than one-third of the population subsists on the brink of famine. The mortality rate there is two to three times the national average. . . . For their children, schooling and medical care are virtually out of reach.

Many Christians share these conditions, but since the Christian community as a whole is relatively privileged, extreme right-wing forces have succeeded in building a movement based on defending Christian privileges against the Muslim majority.

The new cease-fire, the twenty-third to be agreed to since the civil war began last April, was hailed as an "all-embracing political settlement" by Lebanese President Suleiman Franjeh on January 22. Franjeh, the head of the Christian National Liberal party, has good reason to be pleased. Instead of eliminating the system of religious quotas, the accord perpetuates it while making what the editors of the *Wall Street Journal* approvingly referred to January 23 as "a relatively moderate adjustment."

Although details of the agreement are still secret, its general outline is not. It provides for parliamentary seats to be equally divided between Muslims and Christians, with parliament to elect the Muslim premier (currently appointed by the Christian president). In addition, sectarian quotas in lower civil-service jobs are to be eliminated. But the designation of the president as a Maronite Christian will be explicitly stated in the Lebanese constitution.

By maintaining the system of religious quotas, the accord lays the basis for further communal struggles in Lebanon. But the perspective of the bourgeois leaders of the Muslim struggle was always to use the demands of the masses as small change in their governmental maneuvers. Many of those who call themselves leftists, such as Kamal Jumblatt, the chief of the Progressive Socialist party, have also shown their willingness to participate as ministers in the discriminatory capitalist regime.

The proposed settlement has also been strongly backed by the Syrian government. In fact, it was arrived at in negotiations supervised by Syrian Foreign Minister Abdel Halim Khaddam, and the Syrian army and air force chiefs. Truce committees include Syrian officers who will participate in implementing the accord.

The Issue of Palestine

An additional factor in the struggle in Lebanon is the presence of an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 Palestinians in the

country—more than 10 percent of the population. The most destructive stage of the civil war was initiated January 5 when the semifascist Phalangist movement blockaded the Tel Zaatar Palestinian refugee camp. This move was followed by the blockade of two other refugee camps, one of which was taken by the rightists on January 14.

In a January 10 dispatch *Times* reporter Markham quoted Shafik al-Hout, head of the Beirut office of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), who said, "I consider what happened in Lebanon—what is still happening in Lebanon—a test of the ability of the Palestinians to survive in Lebanon."

The Phalangists, who present themselves as the defenders of "the Christian West faced with the Muslim hordes," have long favored the suppression of the Palestinian organizations in Lebanon. Their ideological defense of a Christian-run state parallels the arguments of the Zionists. The Phalangists also fear the growing militancy and organization of the Muslim masses, which the example of the Palestinians has furthered. "Part of the [Palestinian] resistance allied with the international left aims to destroy our socio-economic system," Phalangist leader Pierre Gemayel told *Le Monde's* Rouleau.

The strategy of the Phalangists has been to provoke a confrontation in which they hoped that the Christian-dominated army would defeat and destroy the Palestinian organizations.

Army and air force units have fought openly on the side of the rightist forces, but they were unable to turn the tide, partly because the same religious divisions that beset the rest of Lebanon are reflected in the military. *New York Times* reporter Eric Pace gave the testimony of Palestinian guerrillas in one eastern Lebanese town in a January 23 dispatch: "The guerrillas said that 200 or more Lebanese Army soldiers had deserted in this area, many of them to join leftist militia groups."

The Palestinians in Lebanon were reinforced by several thousand men from the Palestine Liberation Army, a Syrian-based and Syrian-supplied unit nominally under the control of the Palestine Liberation Organization. By the time of the cease-fire the Lebanese Muslims and their Palestinian allies controlled virtually the whole country outside of the heavily Christian Mount Lebanon area and the Christian enclaves in Beirut.

In spite of this, right-wing forces in the Christian community have threatened to provoke a new round of fighting if they think their privileges are threatened. A spokesman for the Phalangist party told *Times* correspondent Markham that the Phalangist leadership had "accepted the cease-fire, but for the rest [of the accord] it is a question mark."

Although the Christian rightists have counterposed Lebanese patriotism to what they see as a threat from Arab nationalism, they have made clear that they prefer the partition of the country to granting the Muslims their rights. Such a partition along religious lines would be a terrible blow to the Arab masses. It would create new refugees deprived of their homes and rights, and another reactionary enclave similar to Israel and totally dependent on imperialism for its survival.

So far Washington has chosen to hold back its Israeli client-state, but the possibility of a new explosion in Lebanon and a wider Middle East war is very real. The temper among ruling circles in the United States was indicated by the conclusion of a January 20 editorial in the *New York Times*, which warned the Arab states that "not one of them will emerge intact from a predatory power play over Lebanon."

There is indeed a danger of "a predatory power play over Lebanon," but the source of the threat is the determination of the U.S. imperialists and their Israeli helpers not to allow the majority of the Lebanese people to decide the fate of their own country.

From the point of view of the Israeli regime, the agony of Lebanon, with the accompanying threat of a wider war, is a golden opportunity. Israeli leaders have made no secret of their view that a smashing military victory, such as they obtained in the 1967 Middle East war, would relieve the growing international pressures on the Zionist state.

This perspective was spelled out in a December 5 article by Chagai Eshed in the Israeli daily *Davar*. "It is rather difficult to deny the fact that Israel is in a political and military trap," he said, adding, "The number of states that recognize the PLO as the representative of the Palestinian people already exceeds the number of states that maintain diplomatic relations with Israel."

Chagai argued, "The trap is closing and as things are now, there is no escape but to break out of it by employing force."

This threat was echoed January 4 by none other than Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who warned that Israel had "sufficient military strength to provide it with room for political maneuver, but possibly we will have to give expression to this [military strength] sooner than many think."

The Israeli rulers face a special temptation in Lebanon because they have long coveted the waters of the Litani River, which runs through southern Lebanon about fifteen miles from Israel's border. Not only would this give them another "defensible border," but it would also enable the Israelis to join forces with the Phalangists against the Palestinians in Lebanon.

Such thinking was doubtless reflected in

the January 19 call of Shmuel Tamir, a leader of the rightist Likud bloc in the Israeli Knesset, for an immediate parliamentary discussion on "the Syrian involvement in Lebanon and the establishment of a terrorist state on Israel's northern border."

Terence Smith reported from Jerusalem in the January 20 *New York Times* that on the same day as Tamir's statement, *Yediot Aharonot*, one of Israel's dailies, called "for the Government to declare a state of military alert in response to the penetration of Palestinian army units into Lebanon."

The following day the Israeli government leaked the news that it was strengthening its military forces along the Lebanese border.

The shaky cease-fire that has been imposed in Lebanon may fall apart at any time. "Even if the immediate crisis can be passed without sparking a larger war," the editors of the *New York Times* said January 21, "the threat in Lebanon of a Palestinian army responsive to orders from Damascus cannot go unnoticed in Israel, Jordan, Egypt and other nearby countries. Lebanon and Israel pose quite different problems for the troubled Middle East, yet both are directly influenced by the continuing presence and increasing militancy of the Palestinian 'refugee' population."

This thinly veiled call for the suppression of the Palestinian movement in Lebanon, while ostensibly aimed at all the "moderate" regimes in the area, is clearly intended to invoke the threat of Israeli intervention. Like the imperialist "democrats" in Washington, the Israeli rulers make common cause with the most reactionary and antidemocratic forces in the world in order to preserve their privileges. Israeli "democracy" is not only founded upon the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their homeland, but also upon the continued existence of the discriminatory capitalist regime in Lebanon. □

Students Protest Repression in Libya

Three hundred Libyan students took part in a forty-eight-hour sit-in at the Libyan diplomatic offices in Cairo January 8 and 9 to protest the repression of student protests in Benghazi, Libya's second largest city.

The students asserted that the Libyan authorities rigged elections to the Student Union at Benghazi University, and opened fire on protest demonstrations held January 4 and 5. They said that as many as ten students were killed.

The Cairo protesters demanded that the government-controlled student union be dissolved and new elections held, that arrested students be released, and that officials who ordered police to open fire be tried.

MFA Report on Putsch Attempt Plays Up Role of Stalinists

By Gerry Foley

The special inquiry board set up by the Portuguese government to investigate the November 25-27 attempted coup released its preliminary report January 20. On the same day, Maj. Otelio Saraiva de Carvalho, previously demoted from the rank of general and stripped of his command over the military security forces, surrendered to the military authorities and was imprisoned.

The report claimed that the orders for the paratroopers' occupation of the air force bases came from Copcon, the special operational command headed by Carvalho. The former general was pictured as the main leader and inspirer of the putsch, although it was suggested that he tried to lead from behind, and at a certain point got cold feet and abandoned his followers. The authors of the report, signed by Gen. Luis António da Silva Araujo of the air force, argued that the paratroopers' action was not an isolated or chance incident.

Allegedly the rebels were prepared militarily and psychologically for this action by the Copcon command; by the military units influenced by the Communist party and centrist groupings following an adventurist policy; as well as by the unions, workers commissions, and tenants commissions controlled by the CP and allied groups.

A number of military officers identified with the policies of Gen. Vasco Gonçalves, the head of the fifth provisional government, were also said to be involved. For example, the report named Major Costa Martins, Gonçalves's minister of labor, as a participant. The representatives of the navy in the Revolutionary Council, the last pro-Gonçalves officers left in this body, were also implicated.

The report did not try to pinpoint political responsibility for the putsch. Most specific questions of this kind were listed as points for further investigation. This was one of the most ominous features, since it represents a sword hanging over the heads of the political organizations the report links to the putsch, in particular the Communist party.

The commission of inquiry tried to establish a broad definition lumping together all the political forces that it claimed supported the November 25 putsch and prepared the way for it. The report used the term "the CP-FUR-COPCON line." The FUR (Frente de Unidade Revolucionária—Front for Revolutionary Unity) included a CP front group, the Portuguese Democratic

Movement, as well as a number of centrist groups with an adventurist policy. One of the two Trotskyist groups in Portugal, the Liga Comunista Internacionalista (LCI—Internationalist Communist League, the Portuguese sympathizing organization of the Fourth International), was also in this front. However, it was not mentioned in the report. Nor was the crudely opportunist Frente Socialista Popular (FSP—People's Socialist Front, a split-off from the SP composed largely of disappointed office seekers).

Three groups in the FUR were mentioned. A deputy of the Portuguese Democratic Movement in the Constituent Assembly allegedly visited one of the command centers of the putsch during the events. Linked directly to putschist actions were the Partido Revolucionário do Proletariado (PRP—Revolutionary party of the Proletariat) and the Liga de União e Acção Revolucionária (LUAR—League for Revolutionary Unity and Action). Both of these organizations have a guerrillaist past and have claimed to have armed wings.

Another organization that claims to be to the left of the Communist party, the União Democrática do Povo (UDP—People's Democratic Union), was also linked to events in the putsch. The report claims, for example, that the PRP and the UDP urged Carvalho on October 1 to "take power."

The UDP developed as a Maoist split from the Communist party that included some CP trade-union cadres. In the last year it has evolved a long way from orthodox Maoism, however, tending to become more and more anarcho-workerist. Its main selling point became an antipolitical concept of "self-organization of the working class." It was one of the main forces in the take-over of the semiofficial Socialist party paper *República* by a "workers commission" and in the attempts to make this paper the voice of the organs of "workers self-organization" such as the "nonparty" workers and tenants commissions.

The UDP was known to be influential in the most radicalized units of Copcon, the Lisbon Light Artillery (RALis), and the Military Police.

According to the report, there were two separate centers of command in the putsch—Copcon, and the Serviço de Detecção e Coordenação das Informações (SDCI—Detection and Information Coordi-

nating Service). In the latter, the officers who are generally identified with the CP were portrayed as playing the main role.

The collapse of the putsch was ascribed by the report primarily to the lack of a unified command, as well as to "ideological frictions." The authors claimed that a group of trade unions in the Lisbon industrial belt, backed by the CP-controlled Intersindical, issued a communiqué at an unspecified time explaining that the rebellion had failed because of the lack of an operational command.

While leading elements concentrated at Copcon headquarters, it is no less clear that in the minds of many, the SDCI was another command center. This is shown by some statements that were made such as "I have come to command this unit on the orders of Major Pereira Pinto (SDCI) and my credentials are from Copcon," as well as by the fact that military personnel and civilians went to SDCI headquarters to be coordinated.

A consideration of these elements reveals that the military chief or chiefs were not clearly defined, or if they were, they did not assume their responsibilities. Without leaders and without a single command, the concerted action could not but suffer.

In any case, the order for unleashing the action had to be given by Copcon, as it was in fact, since the military units involved were directly subordinate to it. . . .

The most common slogan [in the Military Police] was "Otelio or nobody." This watchword, which was decisive in the manipulation that prepared the way for the events, proved fatal in the practical execution of the plan.

Soon, it was noted that there was something amiss in Copcon. The name of General Otelio was not mentioned, to the surprise of many of the plotters, and this resulted in demoralization. After the orders were given to occupy the air force bases, General Otelio left Copcon headquarters, leaving the development of the actions to the activists involved in the plot. The impression given was that after he put his stamp of approval on the action, he stepped away from it.

Moreover, the operation to block the plot was set in motion and it became clear that the forces involved in this operation were determined. The rebel forces, lacking adequate command and coordination, fell into passivity, and one after another surrendered without putting up any resistance.

Parallel to this, the civilian organizations involved suffered the same effects. One after another they fell into passivity, with the leaders showing no commitment and abandoning their activists. In order not to expose their involvement, they transmitted no directives to these activists, leaving them to their own devices.

The report gave a dramatic account of the unleashing and collapse of the putsch, with considerable concrete detail. The sequence

of events, it claimed, was as follows: On November 21, there was a meeting of commanders and officers of various units in the Lisbon Military Region (LMR) at Copcon headquarters. The purpose was to organize opposition to the appointment of Gen. Vasco Lourenço, a member of the "moderate" Group of the Nine that toppled the Gonçalves government, to replace Carvalho as head of the LMR. After the meeting, representatives of this group went to Carvalho to tell him they could not allow him to be removed from his command. Carvalho then asked for a meeting with commanders Almada Contreiras and Martins Guerreiro, the representatives of the pro-Gonçalves naval branch of the Movimento das Forças Armadas (MFA—Armed Forces Movement) on the Revolutionary Council.

It was decided that Carvalho would go to the presidential palace with Almada Contreiras and Martins Guerreiro and other officers, including Vasco Lourenço, to explain to the president that the units of the LMR would not accept the proposed change in command.

At the meeting, the president, General Costa Gomes, allegedly told Carvalho that the latter had no authority to give orders to the paratroopers, since they were not under his command. On November 12, the rebellious paratroopers had declared that they were taking themselves out from under the Air Force Command and placing themselves under Copcon.

On November 22, the report states, Copcon decided to distribute 3,000 automatic rifles in the Beirlas arsenal—then controlled by a workers commission sympathetic to the military "left"—to the Naval Fusileers, a unit politically controlled by the CP.

On November 24, there was another meeting of pro-Carvalho officers in the Copcon headquarters. They were waiting for the decision of the Revolutionary Council on the question of the Lisbon region command, and to discuss what measures to take in response to a blockade set up by right-wing farmers in Rio Maior, north of the capital. At 3:30 a.m., November 25, Carvalho returned from the meeting of the Revolutionary Council. The report continued:

Very tired, worried, and disgusted, he informed them of the council's decision [to maintain the appointment of Vasco Lourenço], and then went into his office.

There were various commentaries. An excited and emotional climate developed. After a while, Captain Tasso was called aside, to the door of the duty officer's room. He talked privately with General Otelo. After some time, General Otelo returned to the room where the other officers were. At that moment, it became known that the paratroopers were going to occupy their bases. It was a decision everyone was waiting for. All that was needed was General Otelo's approval, putting into execution what had been planned.

The action was launched from Copcon with an order to occupy the bases. . . .

The order was transmitted at 4:00 a.m. by radio, with a telephone number given for confirmation. In transmitting the order, an important part was played by Captain Tasso, Major Dias Ferreira,¹ and Captain Lourenço Marques, who telephoned from Copcon to the various air force bases (and perhaps by Major Costa Martins, who was present in the Copcon headquarters and whose name was mentioned in the telephone calls).

All of the officers present at Copcon headquarters, including General Otelo, understood the gravity of these breaches of military discipline. Major Dias Ferreira, duty officer, ordered that no one leave Copcon without official authorization from the unit.

In the morning of November 25, two telephone calls were made to the Centro de Instrução de Artilharia Anti-Aérea e Costa [CIAAC—Anti-aircraft and Coastal Defense Artillery Training Center, based near the mouth of the estuary on which Lisbon is located], asking for help. The CIAAC was called on to set up an anti-aircraft defense system to defend the Copcon headquarters, since it was expected that this would be a target for any aircraft the paratroopers failed to put out of action.

Before noon on November 25, the Copcon headquarters was reinforced by a squad of Naval Fusileers. They remained there until the end of the day. . . .

On the night of November 25, after laborious negotiations, a company of fusileers commanded by First Lieutenant Viegas arrived at Copcon. The commander of the Fusileers Corps had been in Copcon twice, once in the morning and again in the afternoon. On his second visit, he was asked to provide a force to operate in Monsanto [where one of the occupied air force bases was located] and in Sacavém [where RALis is based]. This force, owing to the operation that was taking place [the government's moves] got orders to return to barracks.

At 8:45 p.m., a person identifying himself as Major Serra called the Queluz regiment from Copcon. He indicated that it might be necessary to move against the Commandos, or at least set up ambushes to prevent them from leaving their base. . . .

During the day of November 25 at Copcon, there was furious activity. Among the most notable actions were those of Colonel Varela Gomes, who called the Military Police and RALis in an attempt to send them against the Commandos or the presidential palace, where it was said General Otelo was a prisoner. . . .

On November 26, at 3:00 a.m., General Otelo arrived at Copcon, coming from the presidential palace. He explained the situation, indicating who was going to be arrested. He asked Captain Tasso, Captain Lourenço Marques, and Major Dias Ferreira to inform these persons.

The same day, the abolition of Copcon was announced. Colonel Batista made a proposal that only two officers remain, and that the others go home. General Otelo accepted this. The proposal was made at 4:00 a.m.

During the afternoon and evening of November 26, various papers were burned in the Copcon headquarters.

On November 27, two jeeps were seen transporting papers, tape recorders, and typewriters.

1. Major Dias Ferreira was the commander of the Copcon forces sent to guard *República* while it was occupied by the "workers commission." It was he who turned the paper over to the occupiers.

On November 27, before the Commandos arrived, the officers gathered with General Otelo in Copcon headquarters tried to get him to act. They raised the possibility of his going to Tancos to take the lead of the rebellion. Major Barão da Cunha and Lieutenant Colonel Metelo were the most insistent. The latter went so far as to pull the straps on General Otelo's leather jacket.

On November 25, according to the report, certain officers were not allowed into SDCI headquarters, "apparently because they were not trusted by the plotters." Moreover, "important political figures frequented this headquarters, in particular former ministers of the fifth government, officers of the former Fifth Division of the General Staff [the propaganda division politically dominated by the CP], and former members of the Revolutionary Council removed after the [September 4-5] MFA Assembly in Tancos [which marked the defeat of Gonçalves]."

The radio transmitter removed from Rádio Clube Português, the station most completely controlled by the CP, was allegedly taken to SDCI headquarters to keep it from falling into the hands of the Commandos. Also, troops were allegedly directed from this headquarters to take over the national network studios.

As for the broadcasting services, which were controlled by the CP and its supporters, the report claimed their involvement in the coup was shown by the following facts:

The national radio station refused to continue transmitting a communiqué from the president, and in its place prepared to broadcast a proclamation sent by the Military Police in the name of some members of the Revolutionary Council, said to belong to a Politico-Military Directorate. . . .

Rádio Clube Português broadcast an appeal for insurrection, for armed struggle, for a popular mobilization in support of the struggle begun by the paratroopers.

National Television, which had been occupied, broadcast propaganda about people's power, and gave triumphant-sounding reports of the paratroopers' operations.

A number of concrete allegations were made about Copcon and naval units reinforcing the paratroopers and helping to prepare them for armed action before and during the putsch. On November 20 and 23, RALis allegedly sent two recoilless cannon and an armored car to the paratroopers at the air force arsenal, weapons that were used in the operation.

At the base of the Grupo de Detecção, Alerta, Caça e Intersecção (GDACI—Detection, Alert, Pursuit, and Interception Group), the report claimed: "On November 25, at 7:45 p.m., the installations were occupied by forces of paratroop unit 121 . . . reinforced with elements from RALis, who came in a motorized column of sixty-five men, with various light and heavy equipment."

At Air Force Base No. 6 in Montijo: "At 2:00 a.m. on November 25, two representatives of the CCSFA [Comissão Coorde-

nadora de Sargentos da Força Aérea—Coordinating Committee of Air Force Sergeants] contacted a sergeant from Air Force Base No. 6 . . . and told him, among other things, that it was necessary to occupy the base.”

At 9:35 a.m., “there was a meeting of sergeants, which was also attended by privates. The paratroop sergeant commanding the operation did not want the officers present because he had no confidence in them and heard that they were armed. In this meeting, which lasted until 12:45 p.m., the sergeant explained that the occupation of the base was part of a broader plan and that the orders came from Copcon, the Tancos paratroop base, and that they had been confirmed by a paratroop sergeant from the CCSFA. He said that the fusileers were with them, and that the objective was to give a broader scope to their ‘just struggle’ by attacking certain political-military circumstances in the country.”

Later, “a call was received from RALis, which raised the spirits of the rebels.” At 5:50 on November 25, a Military Police vehicle and another from GDACI arrived. The latter brought a radio. At 9:00, the occupiers received word that Air Force Base No. 5 in Monte Real had surrendered to progovernment troops. The paratroopers were on the point of surrendering but did not because they got a call from the fusileers telling them to hold firm and that reinforcements could be brought in in minutes if necessary.

On the other hand, the paratroopers allegedly sent forty to fifty men to reinforce the RALis base on November 25.

As for the military personnel in the units involved in the rebellion, the report claimed that there was a wide range of responses. On some bases, the action received overwhelming support. On others only a small minority approved it, and the occupation had to be maintained by force.

The motivation for the rising was explained by the report as follows:

We think that it would not be far off to say that what was particularly important in this was the political-military crisis that culminated in the MFA Assembly in Tancos. The reshuffle of the Revolutionary Council that followed, as a result of the universal or nearly universal support for the Document of the Nine, brought about a loss of some leading positions for the followers of the PCP line. After this, the objective was to regain these positions.

The general political explanation given was this:

Most of the country, because of its democratic aspirations, wants a representative government, which can only be established by elections. The so-called revolutionary vanguard seems convinced that this would represent a halting of the revolutionary process, and having no other alternative, it is trying to move toward its goals by political maneuvers, coups, and pressure.

To achieve this objective, the defenders of this

so-called revolutionary vanguard are infiltrating their sympathizers in all places of work, in the factories, the fields, and the barracks, so that through their activism they can replace the hierarchy of professional competence with one defined in a political and partisan way.

Such vague formulas seem designed to lay the basis, taking advantage of the bureaucratic opportunism and elitism of the CP and its allies, for a broad witch-hunt of left political activists.

The picture the report tried to give of the military rebels was that of a collection of adventurers who deceived both themselves and those who followed them, and at the decisive moment proved incapable of providing any effective leadership or even of demonstrating loyalty to those they led into disaster. There is apparently enough truth in this picture for the compilers of the report to be able to hope that it can deepen the demoralization of the sections of the left and workers movement that placed hopes in the forces and personalities implicated.

However, some of the political organizations that looked to Carvalho seem to be firmer in their loyalties than the ambiguous ex-general. The PRP replied to the report January 21 by saying that “Otelos is the personification of the liberating spirit of April 25, which the present government cannot even pretend to imitate. Its hypocritical talk about freedom and democracy does not fool anybody anymore.”

The CP responded to the report by saying that it was clearly on record as having sought “a negotiated solution” to the November 25 crisis. The impact of the disclosures and veiled threats in the report will probably accelerate the retreat from its previous semiopposition stance in the government that the CP has been carrying out since the putsch. In the CP-led union rally January 17, no concrete proposals were put forward for fighting the government’s austerity program.

Furthermore, Melo Antunes, the leader of the Group of the Nine, is now touring Eastern Europe. According to the Portuguese press, the Hungarian paper *Magyar Nemzet* has hailed him as a progressive and noted that the “positive features” of his program were overlooked earlier.

It is not clear why the Portuguese authorities have decided to jail Carvalho now, after taking no action against him for two months and previously giving him a clean bill of health. In an interview with G. Mauvros, the Lisbon correspondent of *Aughi*, the daily paper of the “Interior” faction of the Greek CP, hours before he was arrested, Carvalho noted: “At the time [of the putsch], the members of the Revolutionary Council expressed support for me. Today these same members hold a position that makes it impossible to explain either why they supported me then or why they are jailing me now.”

Carvalho explained that the “military left” had made “mistakes” but that he was not responsible for them. “I think the left lost its last chance when it failed to establish a common platform [at the end of August 1975] between Copcon and the Nine, and especially with Melo Antunes, whom I regard as a military man with the highest political qualifications. We all followed him. The platform had been ready for some time. It was of course the suggestion of Fabião.”²

Perhaps Carvalho’s involvement in the affair was simply so obvious that it was impossible to carry out any widespread investigation and purge without implicating him. Since he was identified as the main military patron of the “extreme left,” it may have been necessary to put him in the dock in order to go after the “leftists.”

In any case, the likelihood is that the military authorities will treat Carvalho with more leniency than any “leftists” foolish enough to have put their trust in him. That is what is indicated by a telegram from Gen. Franco Charais published in the January 21 issue of the Lisbon daily *A Capital*.

General Charais, commander of the Central Military Region, said that he did not believe that there was any coup attempt on November 25 or that Carvalho headed such an operation. “There were a series of military breaches that were visible to everyone. I attribute them to the civilian politicians who surrounded certain military men, leading them to adopt attitudes that were wrong in military terms.”

The general added: “Obviously I don’t think the misstep Otelos made was a grave one. I think that what is happening now is only an accident in Otelos’s political-military career. So, I don’t consider it very important or representative. Otelos is not a general. He doesn’t have the education to be a general. He’s only a major who was promoted to general.”

So, Otelos’s “political-military career” may not even be ruined by the November 25 adventure. But the working class has already suffered severe losses and is threatened by more.

The bourgeois military rulers have seized on this adventure to strengthen their repressive forces; to terrify the opportunist workers leaderships like the CP into abject capitulation to their plans for austerity and repression; and to portray all the demands of the workers as part of a conspiracy of military caudillos that was not only “dictatorial” in its aims but inept. □

2. General Fabião, who was commander of the army up to the November 25 putsch, has a rightist background. He was one of the first officers to explain publicly the need for “professionalizing” the armed forces.

'I Want Actions in Defense of Political Prisoners to Continue'



Informations Ouvrières

Tatyana Zhitnikova and Leonid Plyushch in Paris.

[We print below the text of a telephone interview with Leonid Plyushch and his wife, Tatyana Zhitnikova. It was obtained by the Committee for the Defense of Soviet Political Prisoners¹ on January 19, eight days after Plyushch and Zhitnikova arrived in Paris. The translation from the Ukrainian is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Committee. In the name of Ukrainian youth and all Ukrainians who worked in your defense in the United States, we want to welcome you to the West and wish you the very best.

L. Plyushch. Thank you very much. I want to say that your assistance and the assistance of all the others freed me, and I want actions in defense of political prisoners to continue. We must fight for the rights of people in the entire world, and we Ukrainians must speak out not only in defense of Ukrainians but in defense of all the nationalities in the USSR—the Latvians, Lithuanians, Armenians, Russians, Jews, and others.

Committee. Can you say something about the fate of other prisoners in the Dne-

propetrovsk special psychiatric hospital?

L. Plyushch. Mikola Plakhotnyuk is in a terrible state of health. He was arrested in January 1972 and sent to Lefortova prison. He had held out there and spoken Ukrainian; but now, he has pleaded insanity and has shifted to the Russian language. The pressure on him is very strong. He has a kidney ailment.

T. Plyushch [Zhitnikova]. It is necessary to organize a mass campaign in his defense. Ukrainians in the West must come out in his defense and organize lawyers who will publicize Plakhotnyuk's case internationally. The fate of other people in the camps is similar.

For example, the Ukrainian philosopher

How Tass Reported the Plyushch Case

[International protests forced the Kremlin bureaucrats to release Leonid Plyushch, whom they had confined in a psychiatric prison-hospital for thirty-three months because of his activities in defense of imprisoned dissidents.

[Spearheaded by the International Committee of Mathematicians, this campaign was broadly supported by the left in France

Vasil Lisovy is under constant pressure. He was brought to Kiev in November 1975, allowed a meeting with his wife, and put under pressure to recant. Lisovy resisted this and he is now suffering in camp.

Committee. What are your plans for the future?

L. Plyushch. At present they are uncertain. The teachers union² is looking after us and they have secured three months for us in France. After that we do not know what will happen.

T. Plyushch. We must think about the future of our children, so it is very difficult to say right now. Leonid Ivanovich is feeling better; he is already going outside and talking with people. But he must have several weeks of complete rest.

Committee. Does Leonid Ivanovich plan to continue political activity in the West?

T. Plyushch. Yes. His political views are still Marxist, and he wants to continue his activity as a Marxist here in the West. My views are somewhat different; but what is important, Leonid Ivanovich and I agree, is the need to publicize and give out information in the West on the situation in the USSR. Without the voice of those who are free, it is difficult for anything to be done here.

Committee. Thank you very much. Once again we wish you good luck in your new life. □

2. The Syndicat National des Instituteurs (National Union of Secondary School Teachers), a CP-led union that voted unanimously to support the October 23, 1975, Paris rally in Plyushch's defense.

1. P.O. Box 142, Cooper Station, New York, New York 10003.

brought him near death.

[We print below the Soviet news agency Tass's January 8 announcement of Plyushch's release as reprinted in the January 10 *Le Monde*. This bizarre account of the case serves as a good indication of the embarrassment international publicity of the actual facts (see *Intercontinental Press*, January 26, p. 79) caused in Moscow.

[According to *Le Monde*, this is the first time Tass has mentioned Plyushch. Translation from the French is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

According to a report received by a Tass correspondent, Leonid Ivanovich Plyushch, a resident of Kiev, was arrested and arraigned in 1972 for having committed a serious crime against the state at a time

when he did not hold employment anywhere.

During the investigation, Leonid Plyushch was examined by qualified psychiatrists, who diagnosed him as disturbed. On the recommendation of the court of the Kiev district, he was placed in a psychiatric hospital in Dnepropetrovsk.

Leonid Plyushch's health improved so much following treatment that the court deemed it possible to meet the request of his wife, Tatyana Zhitnikova, to take the sick person under her custody.

Furthermore, Tatyana Zhitnikova asked authorization for her family, including her husband, to move permanently to Israel. The office of visas and registration responded positively to this request.

At the present time, Leonid Plyushch is preparing to leave for Israel accompanied by Tatyana Zhitnikova. □

Mounting Campaign of Terror in Argentina

Juan Carlos Scafile Murded by Rightists

The Argentine Partido Socialista de los Trabajadores (PST—Socialist Workers party) suffered a new loss at the hands of rightist assassins January 15. The bullet-riddled body of PST member Juan Carlos Scafile was found in La Plata along with the body of another man, identified only by the last name Delature. The bodies of the two men had been half destroyed by explosives.

Scafile was a supervisor at the Propulsora Iron and Steel Works in Ensenada and the sixteenth party member to be gunned down since the Peronists came to office in 1973.

When those attending Scafile's funeral attempted to demonstrate in front of the provincial government offices, the police forced them to disperse.

The latest assassinations were only the most recent acts of terror in a campaign of legal and extralegal violence that continues unabated against opponents of the Peronist regime.

Since the beginning of the year, rightist gangs have operated most openly in Córdoba, where twenty-five persons were kidnapped between January 6 and 16. Among them were city employees; teachers; a bank worker; a professional photographer; a construction worker; a doctor; and a national leader of the Communist party, Juan Alberto Caffaratti.

Caffaratti was also a shop steward in the light and power workers union of Córdoba.

Several of the victims were members of the recently banned Partido Auténtico (Authentic party), a split-off from the official Peronist Justicialist party.

Carlos Saúl Risso, a spokesman for the newly appointed provincial government of the province, tried to pass off the wave of kidnappings as a result of "quarrels between guerrilla factions." But even the bourgeois Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión*, which has been most outspoken in its campaign against the guerrillas, was forced to say that the actions had "presumably" been carried out by the ultraright.

The character of such kidnappings was described in a January 8 appeal from the sister of kidnapping victim Dr. Carlos Luis Fages. María Esther Fages wrote:

On December 18 [1975] this professional man was kidnapped by about twenty persons who identified themselves as police. They arrived at his office in La Plata . . . beat him and tied him up while threatening the patients who were waiting for medical attention. They made him get into one of the five vehicles they had arrived in, covered him with a piece of canvas, and left for an unknown destination.

The neighbors and patients immediately denounced the action at the Eighth Precinct Headquarters of the Buenos Aires Provincial Police.

Three petitions of habeas corpus were presented. Each was responded to negatively. . . .

Despite all the efforts made, up to now we have had no news about his whereabouts. . . .

The fate awaiting those kidnapped is

sometimes similar to what happened to three members of the Unión de Juventudes por el Socialismo (UJS—Union of Youth for Socialism), the youth organization associated with *Política Obrera*, the Argentine affiliate of the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International.

On December 11, 1975, Susana Mindez, Alejandro Alazraki, and Osvaldo Carreño were arrested by plainclothes Córdoba provincial police. They were taken to "Informaciones"—the security division of the police—where they were brutally beaten and questioned about various leaders of *Política Obrera*. Mindez, who is sixteen years old, was raped repeatedly.

During the questioning, the police made clear on numerous occasions their relation with the right-wing terrorist group the Argentine Anti-Communist Alliance. "From now on it won't be necessary to kill them with the Triple A," they said, "because we will have the death penalty in the country." The cops were referring to proposed legislation to reinstitute the death penalty for cases of "subversion."

Unlike many other victims of the Peronist repressive apparatus, these three young political activists were released after forty-eight hours.

Protests in the cases of the twenty-five kidnapping victims in Córdoba have disclosed another possible fate.

"Among the concerns that various political groups presented to the chief of police in Córdoba yesterday," a report in the January 17 issue of *La Opinión* said, "is a repeated rumor of the existence of a presumed concentration camp where some of those who disappeared in recent days are being confined. [Police Commissioner Miguel Angel] Brochero replied, assuring them that in fact he was aware of the existence of such rumors and that they were one of the matters most worrying him recently."

A further aspect of the assault on opponents of the Peronist regime was revealed in reports in *La Opinión* on the army's campaign against urban guerrillas. More than 600 persons were arrested in army actions in Argentine cities in mid-January. The most extensive operation began in Mendoza January 17, when troops surrounded the district of Santa Ana, where 10,000 persons live. No one was permitted to enter or leave the area while the army swept through, arresting 500 persons the first day. □

Documents discussed at 1974 Tenth World Congress of Fourth International. 128 pages, 8½ x 11, \$2.50

Intercontinental Press

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Puerto Rican Political Activists Witch-hunted

The Supreme Court of Puerto Rico has reinstated 158 charges against thirteen political activists, involving unsolved crimes dating back several years. It took this action despite the fact that two years ago these same charges, which include a number of counts of bank robbery, were investigated and declared unsubstantiated by a Superior Court judge.

The victims of this witch-hunt are María Angélica Fernández, Francisco Ramírez Vidal, Narciso Rabell Martínez, Andrés N. Paniagua de la Cruz, Ricardo Cruz Martínez, Luis Angel Torres Feliciano, Lydia García Caballero, Manuel F. Lebrón Soto, Federico Fernández Salgado, Israel Rivera López, Luis Alvarez López, Eleazar Fernández Diamante, and Edwin Olivero Rodríguez. A number of them are members and leaders of the Partido Socialista Revolucionario (M-L) (Revolutionary Socialist party [Marxist-Leninist]).

An open letter from the defendants points out that Superior Court Judge Francisco Rebollo López ruled on March 4, 1974, that "as the result of a total lack of proof, there is no probable cause against the petitioners with regard to the crimes they are charged with." He based this conclusion on the fact that the only "evidence" connecting the accused with the crimes was the testimony of police agent Erazo Félix and that none of the victims of the crimes had ever been able to identify any of the accused.

The open letter links the revival of the charges against the activists with a "chain of repressive actions that are carried out against the most conscious sectors of our people every day."

Repressive moves cited in the letter include the attempt to ban the Unión Nacional de Trabajadores (UNT—National Workers Union) on the grounds that it was coercing and intimidating businessmen and workers in Puerto Rico in its organizing efforts.

According to an article in the October 2, 1975, issue of the Puerto Rican daily *Claridad*, such intimidation could be established if "any owner, whose company may or may not be organized in the UNT, or any worker accuses us of having threatened them. . . ."

The open letter also cites the jailing, with exorbitant bail, of trade-union leaders on the basis of far-fetched accusations. Mentioned is the case of Federico Cintrón, who was arrested in August 1975 on charges of participation in a holdup of the Banco Popular. Cintrón, the executive secretary of the Movimiento Obrero Unido (MOU—

United Workers Movement), was initially held on \$200,000 bail, which was later lowered to \$25,000.

Anti-working-class laws have been passed despite outspoken protest by a sizable portion of the trade-union move-

Frei Denounces Pinochet Regime's 'Fascist Character'

Dictatorship Faces Mounting Opposition in Chile



PINOCHET

The savage repression carried out by the Chilean junta, combined with the country's staggering economic crisis and the regime's nearly total isolation on the international arena, has resulted in growing opposition to Gen. Augusto Pinochet's continued rule.

Disenchantment with the junta itself was reflected in the January 3 resignation of Gen. Sergio Arellano Stark, the junta's third-ranking officer and the army chief of staff. Arellano's resignation was reportedly accompanied by an ultimatum to Pinochet from ten top military officers demanding "immediate and radical policy changes," and setting a March deadline for their implementation.

The ultimatum, James Nelson Goodsell reported in the January 5 *Christian Science Monitor*, "includes a demand for urgent measures to save the economy from collapse.

ment, the letter states. An example is the new Ley de Personal (Personnel Law), which establishes restrictions on the rights of public employees.

The thirteen activists have decided to appeal their case to the Supreme Court of the United States. They ask for support from supporters of democratic and trade-union rights throughout the world.

Further information on the case can be obtained from the Comité Anti-Represivo, Apdo. 22411, Estación UPR, Río Piedras, Puerto Rico 00931. □

"It also demands the dissolution of DINA, a secret-police apparatus set up by General Pinochet to ferret out subversives, and an improvement in the military's 'unpleasant image overseas.'"

Publication of reports on a January 4 London *Sunday Times* story detailing these developments was banned in Chile on the grounds that such items might "cause a commotion."

The opposition within the junta was followed by a protest from former Chilean President Eduardo Frei, a Christian Democratic leader who originally welcomed the military coup against the Allende regime. A Catholic publishing house in Santiago, in open defiance of the junta, printed a booklet by Frei denouncing Pinochet's government and demanding a return to democratic forms of rule.

Frei denounced the "fascist character" of some of those in the government, and warned that "the country wants a way out and for this reason does not want the accumulation of tension that, as time goes by, makes more difficult a rational solution in accord with its traditions."

Frei's fear of sharpening tensions, according to excerpts from his book printed in the January 15 issue of the Buenos Aires daily *La Opinión*, was heightened by an economic situation in which industrial production is down 22 to 25 percent from one year ago, and unemployment in the Santiago area is at 16.6 percent. The inflation rate during the first ten months of 1975 was 280 percent.

Frei complained that "in this [economic] policy there is not only an extremely grave social cost, but in addition an economic cost difficult to measure in its magnitude and current and future consequences."

Referring to the nearly universal condemnation of the junta abroad, Frei said of its

critics that "to suppose that they are all puppets of Communist propaganda is to think that they are irredeemably stupid and ignorant. There are countries that nobody could accuse of being conquered by Communism, such as the United States, that voted against Chile in the United Nations in reference to human rights."

Kukrit Dissolves Parliament

Bangkok Strike Shakes Thai Regime

On January 12, at the behest of Premier Kukrit Pramoj, Thailand's King Phumiphol Aduldet dissolved that country's first popularly elected parliament, which was chosen in January 1975. Kukrit formally resigned as premier but will head a "caretaker" government until new elections, scheduled for April 4, are held.

The multiparty coalition government that Kukrit has presided over since its formation last March has been the target of repeated protests by trade unions, students, farmers, and the predominantly Muslim population of southern Thailand. The impetus behind the urban protests in particular was unleashed by the 1973 student upsurge in Bangkok, which ignited workers struggles and toppled the country's military dictatorship.

The defeats suffered by American imperialism in South Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos since last spring have been a further spur to opposition to the Thai regime.

Kukrit's decision to dissolve parliament

Although the tide is shifting against the junta, in some quarters it is still running strong. For example, Anthony Lewis reported in the January 22 *New York Times* that World Bank President Robert S. McNamara has recommended a loan of \$33 million to the junta, although it refused such loans to the Allende government. □

followed by less than a month a powerful strike by thousands of Thai workers. The strike, which was called by the Federation of Labor Unions and backed by the National Student Center of Thailand, demanded that the government revoke its plans to increase the prices of rice and sugar.

On January 6 Kukrit was forced to bow to this demand and others raised by the unionists, including a promise of stepped-up land reform and eased rural credit. The Bangkok workers were evidently concerned that their opposition to food cost hikes not be misrepresented as opposition to im-

proved rural conditions.

The success of these protests put wind in the sails of the government's parliamentary opposition, especially the Democratic party headed by Kukrit's brother, Seni Pramoj, and the Socialist party. Kukrit dissolved parliament amid indications that the opposition would make good on a threatened vote of no confidence.

According to a January 12 dispatch from Bangkok by *Washington Post* correspondent Lewis M. Simons, Socialist party proposals included abolition of the Anti-Communist Act, the "elimination of imperialist influences in all forms—political, economic and military," and "an accelerated program of land reform and a narrowing of the economic gap between the extremely wealthy minority and the impoverished majority of Thailand's 40 million people."

The charged political atmosphere that forms the backdrop to these reform proposals evidently did not sit well with Thailand's military brass, many of whom are also among the country's wealthiest men.

According to Simons, "... a group of senior officers, led by Defense Minister Pramarn Adireksarn, met with Kukrit at his home and, according to an informed source, suggested to Kukrit that unless he dissolved Parliament, the nation faced the threat of a military coup." □

Peace Foundation Still Faces Tax Suit

Worldwide Protests Save Russell House

The Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation* in Britain has won its campaign to prevent the city of Nottingham from razing its headquarters. The Nottingham City Council had claimed that the Bertrand Russell House stood in the path of a needed realignment in the local road system.

Foundation leaders, however, suspected that their activities in defense of political prisoners around the world were actually at the root of the city's "construction plans." The foundation, established by the late Bertrand Russell, rose to international prominence during its 1967 inquiry into Washington's war crimes in Vietnam. In 1974 the foundation conducted another tribunal, focusing on repression in Chile and the White House role in the overthrow of the Allende regime.

A worldwide campaign in defense of the foundation launched last year has forced a reversal of the demolition order. A January

14 press release from the foundation reported, "The British Government's enquiry into the proposal of the Nottingham City Council ... has resulted in a decision which completely vindicates the Foundation's claim that the proposals were inexplicable in technical or planning terms alone."

According to the release, the mayor of Nottingham received "official representations" from the mayors of six Italian cities, including Florence, Bologna, Turin, and Genoa. Cambodia's Prince Norodom Sihanouk condemned the city's proposal. Letters of protest from private citizens poured in from Sweden, Japan, the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, India, and many other countries. Several members of the British Parliament lodged protests.

"The Foundation's victory in this case is not the end of its troubles, however," the release reported. The foundation still faces court action by British authorities who are pressing a complex tax claim against it, potentially causing the organization grave financial problems. □

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Canadian LSA-LSO Holds Eleventh Convention

By Kate Alderdice

[The following article appeared in the January 19 issue of *Labor Challenge*, a revolutionary-socialist fortnightly published in Toronto.]

* * *

Close to 200 socialists from across Canada met in Toronto December 27-30 to map a strategy to fight Trudeau's wage controls and other aspects of the present offensive against working people. It was the eleventh pan-Canadian convention of the League for Socialist Action/Ligue Socialiste Ouvrière (LSA/LSO), a revolutionary-socialist organization with members in cities from Montréal to Vancouver.

The key resolution before the convention, "The Changing Face of Canadian Politics: New Challenges and Opportunities for Socialists," noted a fundamental change in the Canadian economic and political situation in 1974-75.

The adoption of legislated wage and salary controls marks the key turning point, the resolution states, "the end of an era in Canadian politics."

The resolution describes the different sides of the new situation before socialists:

- The international capitalist economy is in the midst of the first generalized recession since the 1930s. This recession marks the end of the long period of postwar capitalist expansion. From now on, capitalist economies will be characterized by growing inflation, unemployment, and chronic crises. We have already seen the best that capitalism has to offer.

- Canada is no exception to this general trend. This point was explained by Paul Kouri, Montréal organizer of the LSO, in the report leading off discussion of the resolution. Kouri said, "If you want an idea of the future of Canada you have to look at what's been going on in the last two or three years in the United States, where the economic crisis is much more advanced."

- The capitalist rulers in Canada and around the world are responding by trying to shift the burden of economic difficulties onto working people through measures such as social-service cuts and imposition of wage controls.

- The ruling class's strategy of making the workers pay for its economic problems will inevitably change the way Canadian workers think and act. This new period has not yet profoundly altered the consciousness of working people, but it has already

affected the course of the class struggle, as reflected in increased labor militancy and more confrontations with the capitalist rulers. It will lead to a widespread radicalization and politicization of workers in the future.

- The turn in the economic and political situation places an enormous challenge before socialists. The capitalist system is more and more incapable of meeting the needs of working people. As the economic crisis deepens, workers will seek an alternative, and will be more receptive to the socialist view. There will be increased opportunities for socialists to win wide acceptance of key aspects of their program, and to begin to take the lead in mass struggles. A revolutionary organization will be able to grow quickly in size and influence.

But this will only happen if socialists understand the challenges of the new period and are prepared to take advantage of new openings and opportunities.

The latest crises of the capitalist system reaffirm the urgent need to build a revolutionary party which can lead in the socialistic transformation of Canada.

The resolution presented by Kouri was one of two placed before delegates by the outgoing leadership of the LSA/LSO. The second resolution dealt with the development of Québec nationalism and the attitude socialists should adopt toward it.

The resolution was presented by Colleen Levis, Québec national secretary of the LSA/LSO. It analyzed the contradictory features of nationalism in Québec, but reaffirmed that its rise has had on the whole an immensely positive impact on the struggle for national and social liberation. This contrasts sharply with the totally reactionary role of nationalism in English Canada, an imperialist and not an oppressed nation.

It also explained the LSA/LSO's support of the demand for Québec independence as an expression of the Québécois struggle for national self-determination. Québec's national liberation, it pointed out, can be won only through a victorious socialist revolution and the establishment of a workers and farmers government.

The struggles of Québec workers and students played an important role in the convention discussions. Among the convention delegates were leaders of the October 23 demonstration of 20,000 against the

public transit fare increase in Montréal, who related the experience of the struggle to other delegates.

In his report on the political resolution, Paul Kouri noted that "the explosiveness of the political situation, the organization, combativity, and politicization of the workers and students, makes Québec a real volcano for capitalism—the weak link in Canadian imperialism."

Both resolutions presented by the outgoing leadership were unanimously adopted by the delegates.

The discussions at the convention reflected the League's internationalistic outlook and its active involvement in the work of the Fourth International. The League is the Canadian section of the Fourth International, the world party of socialist revolution founded in 1938 by Leon Trotsky.

The first report, given by Dick Fidler, discussed the key issues in the Portuguese revolution, on which a lively debate between two positions has developed within the Fourth International. The report reaffirmed the position defended by *Labor Challenge* and *Libération*, its sister-publication in Québec.

The second report, by Art Young, organizational secretary of the LSA/LSO, dealt with the progress of the work of the Fourth International around the world. Young noted in particular the new forces now being attracted towards the Fourth International. A Canadian example is the Groupe Socialiste des Travailleurs du Québec (Québec Socialist Workers Group—GSTQ), affiliated to the Organizing Committee for the Reconstruction of the Fourth International. A delegation from the GSTQ attended the convention as observers.

The Canadian section, Young said, must work actively to promote this trend while participating in the discussion in the Fourth International and working to increase its strength and unity. The reports by Fidler and Young were both unanimously adopted by the convention.

The convention was attended by 187 delegates and observers from English Canada and Québec. Most were members and supporters of the LSA/LSO and of the Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes, the youth organization which is in programmatic agreement with the LSA/LSO. In addition, there were guests from the Socialist Workers party, sister organization of the LSA/LSO in the United States; the Groupe Marxiste Révolutionnaire, and the Revolutionary Marxist Group, sympathizing organizations of the Fourth International in Québec and English Canada; and the GSTQ.

The youngest convention participant was fifteen; the oldest, seventy. Eighty-eight were women, and ninety-nine were men. The largest occupational category consisted of members of trade unions and other labor

organizations; thirty-two union locals were represented. Sixty-three of those present were attending their first LSA/LSO convention.

Delegates drew a positive balance of the two years work since the last LSA/LSO convention in 1973. These two years saw a series of full and fruitful discussions in the League on political questions of the greatest importance to revolutionaries in Canada—the character of the New Democratic party and how revolutionaries should relate to it; a socialist analysis of Québec nationalism; the character and role of a revolutionary group in a period like the present one in Canada.

The League's membership was reduced in 1973-74 by the unprincipled split of two groupings from the organization. For a time its size was constant, but in the last six months the League's membership has increased 10 percent. The LSO, the Québec wing of the organization, has experienced the most rapid growth.

The League's forces consolidated into a smaller number of stronger branches after 1973. The local branches have now grown much stronger, and all departments of the League's work have registered impressive gains. The League has now balanced its budget in all departments, retiring a very large debt built up before 1972.

At the same time, members of the LSA/LSO were participants in some of the most important struggles of Canadian working people during that period. They took part in the campaign to defend Dr. Henry Morgentaler and to win the right to safe, legal abortion. They were part of the protests against the federal government's racist Green Paper on immigration.

LSA/LSO branches have been active in supporting and building the New Democratic party, the party of the labor movement in English Canada, while helping to lead opposition to its leadership's procapitalist program. LSA/LSO candidates have also run in municipal, provincial, and federal elections to place the socialist alternative before working people.

The LSA/LSO has been part of the discussion of the lessons of the Portuguese revolution and the defense of the democratic gains by Portuguese workers since the overthrow of the Caetano regime.

Members of the League played important roles in strike struggles by workers trying to defend their standard of living against the assault by the ruling class and government. Among delegates at the convention were members of the Vancouver local of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers who helped organize the recent cross-country postal strike, including members of the strike committee and picket captains. As well, several participants in the convention have played a similar role in the Metro

Toronto teachers' strike.

The convention was prepared by a two-month written and oral discussion in the local League branches. A preconvention discussion bulletin was published in French and English, open to all members of the organization. Any member could submit a written contribution for translation into the other language and distribution through the discussion bulletin to all members. In the two months of preconvention discussion, members submitted forty-one contributions, which were published in ten French-language bulletins and eleven English language bulletins.

The convention of the LSA/LSO is the highest decision-making authority in the organization. Through conventions the membership decides the League's position on program and strategy and maps out the line of march for the next period. Delegates are elected by the local branches to represent the members at the convention. There they hold the final discussions on all matters before the convention, and vote to adopt, amend, or reject resolutions governing the League's work for the next two years.

In addition to the reports already mentioned, the delegates also adopted a report by Kathleen Dalton on the work of the Young Socialists/Ligue des Jeunes Socialistes (YS/LJS) among students and other youth. The report proposed that the LSA/LSO should increase its support and collaboration with the YS/LJS in order to win more youth to the ideas of socialism.

Four panel discussions took up concrete tasks of revolutionaries in four important areas—the trade unions, the New Democratic party, the Québec student movement, and the circulation of socialist publications to working people.

The delegates elected a new Central Committee of twenty-nine full and alternate members, to lead in the implementation of the convention decisions.

The organizational report presented a series of goals for revolutionary socialists to meet the challenge of the new period. The report, given by John Riddell, executive secretary of the LSA/LSO, emphasized the following key tasks for the League:

- Increased work among students, especially in Québec, where the student movement is organized and has undertaken militant actions recently;
- More involvement in the New Democratic party in English Canada, where there has been increased activity and discussion in the recent period;
- Continued strengthening of work in the trade unions, with the prospect of stepped-up strikes as workers come more and more under attack;
- Publication of a series of pamphlets explaining the basic program of socialism for Canada in French and English;

- Support for the campaign launched by *Labor Challenge* and *Libération* to increase their circulation and to lay the basis for their future expansion in size and frequency of publication.

The report concluded, "We forecast that Canada will be shaken to its roots in the coming years by the crisis of capitalism. We forecast revolutionary opportunities not just in the far-distant future but in our generation. The approach of these tumultuous events will shake the League to the roots. They will transform our movement, and give us the opportunity to take successive qualitative leaps forward in recruiting new forces and in assimilating them. They will compel us to break with any routinism or rigidity, and to act always with confidence in our ability to build the mass party of the Canadian revolution." □

Frame-up Charges Dropped Against Robert Williams

The district attorney in North Carolina's Union County on January 16 dropped kidnapping charges against Black activist Robert Williams. The prosecutor said that according to doctors his star witness, Mabel Stegall, "is physically unable to testify in court and further there is no promise that her condition will improve."

In 1961 Williams was indicted on charges of kidnapping Mabel Stegall and her husband Bruce as they traveled through the Monroe, North Carolina, Black community. Williams, a leader of the Union County National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) at the time, actually rescued the Stegalls from a crowd of angry Blacks who mistook the white couple for local racist thugs, who frequently drove through the Monroe Black community spraying gunfire.

"The Stegalls would have been killed if it weren't for me," Williams said. "Mrs. Stegall knows that." He pointed out that several years ago she even asked the prosecutor to drop the charges against him.

Union County authorities drummed up the charges against Williams in order to rid Monroe of a militant Black freedom fighter who had led many struggles against segregated public facilities and helped the Black community organize armed self-defense against night-riding Ku Klux Klan terrorists. The witch-hunt forced Williams to flee the United States, and he subsequently lived for several years in Cuba and China.

Williams gave himself up to North Carolina authorities in December 1975 to fight the frame-up once and for all. Charges still stand against four others indicted along with Williams, but legal efforts are being pressed to have them dropped.

950 Attend 15th National Convention of YSA

By Steve Clark

[The following article appeared in the January 23 issue of the *Militant*, a revolutionary-socialist newsweekly published in New York. It has been abridged for reasons of space.]

* * *

"A lot has happened in the year since our last convention," said Ilona Gersh, opening the fifteenth Young Socialist Alliance national convention.

"We've seen the defeat of U.S. imperialism in Vietnam," she said, "the ongoing struggle of the Portuguese workers, civil war in Angola, and mounting protests against ruling-class attacks on our right to an education and decent living standards."

Gersh is the YSA's newly elected national secretary. The 950 young socialists she was speaking to had gathered at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee campus to assess the events of the past year and chart a course for 1976. During the five days from December 28 to January 1, they listened to reports, engaged in debates and discussions, participated in workshops, attended classes, and hammered out a plan of action. What did they decide?

- To initiate teach-ins, rallies, and demonstrations on their high school and college campuses demanding "U.S. hands off Angola!"

- To continue their activities in defense of school desegregation and busing and against all aspects of racism in American society.

- To step up their efforts to build a mass movement for speedy passage of the Equal Rights Amendment.

- To mobilize support for the United Farm Workers' boycott of scab grapes, lettuce, and Gallo wines.

- To organize protests against education cutbacks and cost hikes in the high schools, community colleges, and universities.

- To campaign actively for the Socialist Workers 1976 presidential and vice-presidential candidates, Peter Camejo and Willie Mae Reid; and much, much more.

The colorful banners that draped the convention hall highlighted these and other issues of concern to the YSA. Several read: "Free all political prisoners," "Solidarity with the Portuguese workers," "End FBI and CIA harassment," "Self-determination for Palestine," and "Join the YSA."

In the convention center, many organiza-

tions set up tables and displays, among them the Committee to Free Ray Mendoza; the Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran; the U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners; the campus Veterans Union; the United Farm Workers; and Georgians for the ERA.

A special program on the first evening of the convention celebrated the YSA's fifteen years of socialist activity on the nation's high school and college campuses.

"I remember the first YSA convention pretty well," said Jim Lambrecht, the YSA's first national secretary, now an active member of the Socialist Workers party in New York City. "We felt pretty confident—all 100 or so of us—after our first four years of work going back to 1956."

That was the year, Lambrecht explained, that important world events in the Soviet Union, Hungary, and Poland brought together the initial handful of socialist activists who would found the YSA four years later.

Tim Wohlforth, the YSA's founding chairperson, explained how that handful went about looking for new adherents. "We turned outward toward the American students," he said, "toward the first stirrings on the university campuses—stirrings which in that period were mostly at the level of thought, of a beginning to question the period that they had lived through. But this questioning would be a precursor for the actions to come."

Wohlforth developed political differences with the YSA and Socialist Workers party in the early 1960s and for a decade led a small opponent organization, the Workers League. Recent national and world events, however, led to changes in Wohlforth's views, and at the anniversary celebration he expressed his solidarity with the YSA and SWP.

A report to the convention by Joan Quinn, a member of the YSA National Executive Committee, placed the YSA's current activities against the backdrop of world capitalism's deepgoing economic crisis.

"The deeply felt uncertainties about the economic situation," Quinn said, combined with the Watergate revelations and the exposure of CIA and FBI harassment and assassination plots, "have spread the openness to radical alternatives in this country." She pointed out that untamed inflation and

continuing high unemployment levels have led to the beginnings of a changing consciousness and renewed militancy among American workers and trade unionists.

"The special concern of the YSA in this changed situation," Quinn explained, "is the 26.6 million high school and college students in the country—organizing this force in the struggles ahead."

Much of Quinn's report and the discussion that followed centered on the ruling-class assault against university and high school education.

"The fight against these attacks on our right to an education and a decent job," Quinn noted, "will be a long and hard one. Students can't win it alone. It is part of the larger fight by working people against the attacks on their living standards."

Struggles against racism in education were another focus of discussion at the convention. A report by Nan Bailey, who was elected YSA national chairperson at the convention, emphasized the YSA's activity in support of school desegregation and busing.

In her report Bailey said, "We think that the National Student Coalition Against Racism (NSCAR) is the kind of united-action coalition that is needed in the fight against racism. It has recognized the importance of organizing the power of the student movement and using the resources of the campus to build this fight."

Hattie McCutcheon, a SCAR activist at Detroit's Wayne State University, talked about the desegregation fight in that city. "The key thing for SCAR today," she said, "is to conduct an education campaign to convince the majority of people in this country why they should support busing."

"But we also have to convince people that we know how to win desegregation," she said. "That means demonstrations like the May 17, 1975, march of 15,000 in Boston sponsored by the NAACP, and the picket lines and teach-ins sponsored by SCAR around the country in November."

"If you took a trip around the country and asked local SCAR activists what they are doing," Bailey said in her report, "you're likely to get quite a few different answers. NSCAR recognizes that racism comes packaged in many forms."

She pointed to NSCAR's participation in struggles for bilingual-bicultural education for Puerto Rican and Chicano students, protests against cutbacks in ethnic studies



Lou Howort/Militant

Plenary session at convention. With nearly 1,400 members and 65 chapters, YSA is now larger than ever before.

programs, demonstrations against police brutality, and fights against discriminatory layoffs.

"Defense of political prisoners and other victims of capitalist injustice is an increasingly important activity," said delegate Liz Jayko, a St. Louis YSA leader active in the effort to clear J.B. Johnson of a racist, frame-up murder charge.

Following the discussion on the fight against racism, Nancy Brown, a member of the YSA National Executive Committee, presented a report on the group's perspectives for participation in the women's liberation movement.

"The March 8 International Women's Day is a traditional holiday for working women," Brown said. "There is no better way to celebrate it this year than to bring together women's rights supporters in cities across the country to demand, 'Ratify the ERA!'"

Brown also noted the growing interest in socialist ideas within the feminist movement.

"The three previous reports have defined the YSA's strategy for new campus struggles," Rick Berman told the delegates as he began his organizational report to the convention.

"This report should begin a discussion on how we can deepen our high school and campus orientation in this new political situation," Berman, who was elected YSA national organizational secretary at the convention, proposed that the YSA aim to build separate chapters at each campus and high school. Currently, YSA chapters include students from several campuses most often organized on a city-wide basis.

"Doing this," he said, "should make it

simpler for the YSA to expand onto new campuses and high schools, win new members more easily and make them feel part of the YSA, and become more involved than ever in campus and high school life."

Berman said that the YSA's growth during the fall showed that the reorganization proposal was coming at a good time. With nearly 1,400 members and sixty-five chapters, the YSA has grown to its largest size in history, he reported.

During the discussion following the organization report, Phyllis Lee of the Baltimore YSA explained how the tour of Willie Mae Reid—the 1976 Socialist Workers party vice-presidential candidate—helped expand the YSA onto new campuses in her area.

"At four out of five of the campuses where Willie Mae Reid spoke," Lee said, "this was the first public YSA event to occur there." In all, she said, 600 people heard Reid speak, and six joined the YSA.

On the second night of the convention, Reid and SWP presidential candidate Peter Camejo were the featured speakers at a socialist campaign rally attended by 1,000 people.

Berman stressed the importance of the suit filed by the YSA and SWP against government surveillance and harassment of the two groups. "Campus chapters have to be on their toes to take full advantage of opportunities to win support for the suit," he said. "We'll find the biggest interest on campus right after the latest revelations of government dirty tricks hit the morning paper or the evening news."

The YSA convention's decision to launch a campaign against U.S. intervention in Angola was a highlight of the five-day

gathering. When the proposal was presented by Joan Quinn, it was met with a spontaneous and extended ovation. Several hundred convention participants also attended a special class on Angola given by outgoing YSA National Chairperson Malik Miah.

Revolutionists from Puerto Rico, Portugal, and Canada attended the convention and presented greetings to the participants. Written messages were received from socialists in Britain, Israel, Mexico, Sweden, Iran, and Australia.

Almost the entire fourth day of the convention was set aside for a debate on revolutionary strategy in Portugal between Chuck Petrin, speaking for the YSA National Executive Committee, and Michel Mill, representing the International Majority Tendency of the Fourth International.

A leader of one of the two Portuguese Trotskyist groups—the Partido Revolucionário dos Trabalhadores (PRT—Revolutionary Workers party)—also participated in the discussion following the two reports. Earlier in the convention, the PRT leader presented greetings to the convention, stressing the importance of the events in his country and of collaboration between Portuguese and U.S. revolutionists.

YSA members at the convention agreed. Shirley Peña, a Chicana from San Francisco who has just recently joined the YSA, told me: "Everything at the convention has been great, but the one thing that impressed me the most, I'd say, is when the comrade from Portugal read his greetings.

"I started thinking, 'I'm going to be in that situation sometime.' It's really exciting to think that right now I am playing an active part in bringing that day about." □

Capitalism Fouls Things Up

Should Concorde Ever Get Off the Ground?

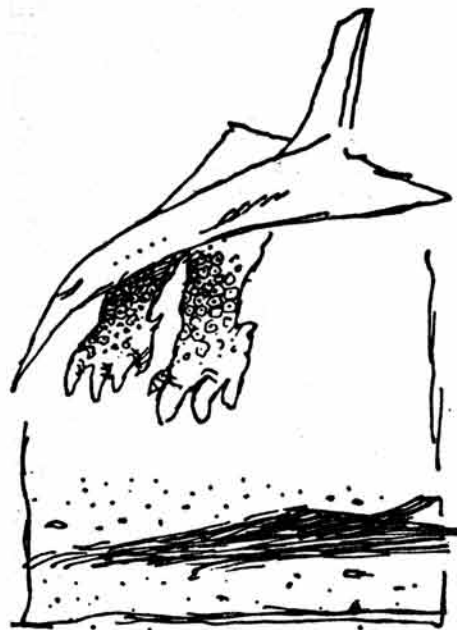
By Noah Ellsworth

British Airways and Air France sent two of the sixteen proposed Concorde supersonic jets zooming through the earth's atmosphere January 21 on the plane's first two commercial passenger flights.

The Concorde, which can travel at 1,350 miles an hour (twice the speed of sound), is the fruit of thirteen years of joint work by the British and French governments and aerospace industries. The project absorbed nearly \$3 billion during that time.

From the standpoint of sheer speed, the maiden flights suggested that the project might be worthy of such an enormous investment. The British Airways flight slashed three hours from the flying time of the fastest subsonic jet from London to the Arab-Persian Gulf state of Bahrain. Air France made the trip from a Paris suburb to Rio de Janeiro about four hours more swiftly.

Speed aside, however, many objections have been raised to the Concorde on environmental grounds, not to mention the twisted priorities involved in allocating billions of dollars to such a project while transportation and other social-service needs of British and French workers go sadly wanting.



lb Ohisson/New York Times

The Concorde's many critics argue that it will raise pollution levels near airports to dangerous levels, and that it could damage the earth's ozone layer, which protects human beings from the sun's ultraviolet radiation. Damage to this layer could increase the incidence of skin cancer.

Environmentalists have aimed their heaviest fire at the tremendous racket generated by the jet. "When the age of supersonic air passenger transport arrives in Britain next week with the first commercial Concorde flight to Bahrain, many people are in for a noisy shock," London *Observer* correspondent Ian Mather said January 11.

Following a series of Concorde test flights from London's Heathrow Airport last summer, the Greater London Council reported findings that the new jet on takeoff is more than twice as loud as the Boeing 707, and as much as six times louder than the quieter Lockheed TriStar.

Other studies have shown that the Concorde is substantially noisier than even the Boeing 747, which itself creates more noise than any other plane currently in commercial use.

Mather notes in the *Observer* that according to the manufacturer's own tests, the "Concorde's take-off route over the Thames Valley will make the inhabitants of Reading think they are in a noisy Tube train, while Windsor people will not even be able to hear themselves speak indoors." And the January 19 *Business Week* quotes the contention of Richard Wiggs, secretary of Britain's Anti-Concorde Project, that "as it [the Concorde] takes off from Heathrow, in the communities near Heathrow, it is producing noise seven times as loud as the official takeoff noise limit and above the medically recognized threshold of pain."

Little wonder that Bishop Hugh Montifiore, a representative of the noise-control association of communities surrounding Heathrow, told U.S. Secretary of Transportation William Coleman recently that "the noise is not hell because hell goes on forever. It is more like a secular form of purgatory."

Coleman was presiding at a one-day hearing January 5 on a request by the French and British governments to operate

six Concorde flights daily to the United States. Four flights would use New York's Kennedy International Airport, and two would fly into Dulles International Airport outside Washington, D.C. Coleman said he will announce his ruling on the requests in early February.

Reversing a previous position favorable to the Concorde, the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has now come out against the French and British requests. EPA official Roger Strelow was quoted in the January 6 *Wall Street Journal* as saying that Concorde flights into Kennedy and Dulles airports would run "directly counter to the noise abatement and other environmental policies and programs of the U.S."

Environmental protection will most likely rank low on Coleman's list of considerations, since more "weighty" matters hang in the balance for the high government and business circles that will have a say over his final decision. Most Democratic and Republican party officials at every level of government have recently demonstrated their view that environmental concerns are a bothersome "frill" where profits and tax revenues are at stake.

Some powerful U.S. interests are worried that Concorde's competition in trans-Atlantic travel could deal a serious blow to financially troubled American carriers such as Pan Am and Trans World Airlines. TWA estimates that in one year it could lose about 40 percent of its first-class fares in passenger service.

There is undoubtedly a grain of truth in the bitter complaint of one European official—quoted by correspondent Clyde H. Farnsworth—that the anti-Concorde hue and cry in certain Washington circles "is a holding operation to get the American aircraft industry back into the business of supersonic transport. If this were Boeing's plane do you think there would be such a fuss?" (*New York Times*, January 7.)

These purely financial considerations may not have the upper hand in Washington right now, however. According to the report in the January 19 *Business Week*, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger reminded Coleman in a letter last December that an "outright rejection . . . would be



viewed as a serious blow by two of our closest friends and allies whose interests coincide with our own in so many areas."

Kissinger concluded his letter, "I hope that . . . you will find it possible to weigh carefully the concerns of these two close allies together with the environmental and other criteria you must consider." The secretary of state also implied in the letter than any final ruling would come not from Coleman, but from the Oval Office.

Of course, the French and British governments and aerospace interests, who have spared no effort or expense in lobbying Washington for a favorable decision, have been very pleased to keep the discussion on this level. Steering away from the environmental issues, they demagogically contend that a defeat for the Concorde would be nothing more than an expression of American protectionism. Threats of retaliation against U.S. suppliers and air carriers have flown hot and heavy.

Robert Adley, for example, a Conservative member of the British Parliament, urged British trade unionists to subject New York imports to "appropriate political delays" if the Concorde is barred from Kennedy airport.

Britain's Labour government has been no more concerned about the eardrums of New York workers than those of the British workers it claims to represent. This is in spite of the fact that the previous Wilson cabinet attempted in 1964 to cancel Britain's end of the deal, before caving in under pressure from French President Charles de Gaulle.

The Communist party-led Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT—General Confederation of Labor) has done no better, joining in the campaign whipped up by the French bourgeoisie. A January 6 statement by the Aérospatiale Section of the CGT said, "We demand that the French Government should take economic and political retaliatory measures if the Concorde is prevented from landing in the United States." (*New York Times*, January 7.)

Aérospatiale is the French aerospace company that cooperated with British Aircraft Corporation in building Concorde.

American Scientists' Poll: 62% Favor Nuclear Slowdown

The Federation of American Scientists released the results of a poll December 8, 1975, showing that 62% of its respondents favored either zero growth or a phasing out of nuclear power plants.

The poll, a survey of the 7,000 members in the federation, provided four alternative possibilities. Of those balloting, the choice was as follows:

Rapid advance	16 percent
Go slow	21 percent
Moratorium	36 percent
Phase out	26 percent

February 2, 1976

Tens of Thousands of 'Tapols' Remain

Firsthand Accounts of Suharto's Torture Camps



SUHARTO: His prisons are described as "a filthy, uncivilised and inhuman hell."

A report by Philip Jacobson in the *Sunday Times* of London January 11 provides two firsthand accounts of the conditions facing the tens of thousands of Indonesian political prisoners.

"Permanently undernourished to the point of occasional deaths by starvation," Jacobson said, "constantly ill with no medical care, farmed out for gruelling physical labour at the whim of their captors, Indonesia's tapols—a contraction of *tahanan politik*, political prisoner—pass their days in what one first-hand account denounces as 'a filthy, uncivilised and inhuman hell.' The use of torture is alleged to be so widespread that it cannot be dismissed as isolated excesses."

Most of these prisoners date back to General Suharto's seizure of power in 1965, which was accompanied by mass arrests and the slaughter of hundreds of thousands of Indonesians. Suharto's own statistics on the roundup are an indication of the extent of the repression: The government says that it has freed 540,000 political prisoners since 1965.

French journalist Jacques Decornoy estimated last fall that between 55,000 and 100,000 persons remain in jails or concentration camps. (*Le Monde*, October 1.)

Jacobson notes that the Suharto regime has denied the use of torture, but he

dismisses this claim. ". . . there exists an impressive weight of evidence, much of it from independent sources, to support the charges," he said, pointing to accounts by foreign journalists, former detainees, and human rights groups such as Amnesty International.

Jacobson cites in detail an account of Suharto's terror by Tjiou, a young woman who in 1968 was arrested in connection with her membership in a Communist youth organization at the time of the Suharto coup. She spent several years in various tapol camps before leaving Indonesia in 1975.

At the time of her arrest, Tjiou told the *Sunday Times*, she was stripped and beaten. She said an army intelligence officer "started to burn off my hair. . . you cannot realize the pain to me of my hair burning. Then they put me on the table and opened my legs. They took a stick and thrust it up my vagina. They burnt my pubic hair. I could not believe I was still alive."

Tjiou described other horrors that she witnessed: the death of a village leader from electrical torture; a woman whose head was doused with boiling water, and another whose nipples had been cut off; torture victims, covered with blood, huddled together at a military post.

Jacobson also quotes from an account recently smuggled out of a concentration camp in East Java. The report describes interrogation tactics witnessed by its author. "With the first question they are kicked and beaten and things rapidly get worse. . . electric shock is administered to the person's ears, nose and genital organs to extract forced confessions."

The report continues, "To prevent screams being heard, songs were played loudly over a tape recorder."

Another tapol was punished for resisting his torturers by being beaten and dragged through a ditch until he was caked in mud and blood. Then, one of his arms was chained to his leg so that he could neither stand nor lie down. Left in this position for eleven months, he eventually went mad.

Seemingly embarrassed by the international attention focused on the plight of the tapols, the Indonesian regime announced last October that it would soon begin to release some of the remaining prisoners from the 1965 roundup at the rate of 2,500 a year. Even if this commitment is honored, it will provide little relief to tens of thousands of tapols who under such a plan could be held for decades more. □

The Peasant Movement in Peru Today

[The following interview with Peruvian revolutionist Hugo Blanco appeared in the December 4, 1975, issue of the Lima weekly *Marka*. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Question. What changes do you find in the situation of the peasantry?

Answer. I have returned to Cuzco after a thirteen-year absence, and I have noticed great changes. The big landowners as such have practically disappeared. However, at the same time it is clear that the peasantry continues to live as miserably as before. This is one obvious contradiction. When you talk at greater length with the peasants, you realize that the form of exploitation has changed. Before, exploitation was more feudal; now it is capitalist exploitation. Now the struggle of the peasantry is a struggle against capitalism and the capitalist state.

I think that the basic demand now is no longer "Land or death" as it was then. Now it is "Socialism or death."

*Q. What are your views on the leadership and program of the CCP?*¹

A. With regard to the centralization of the peasants, when I reached Peru—despite the differences I had on some points with the *compañeros* leading the CCP—I told them directly that it seemed to me that the CCP was the biggest and most important centralizing organization the Peruvian peasantry had had in its entire history. There is no doubt of this. There have been more explosive periods than this, for example, the period of 1962-63, but in terms of organization and centralization, the peasantry has never had a body of this type.

We Trotskyists support the CCP for two principled reasons. First, because it is an independent organization. And that is essential. We don't raise any questions about the political positions of the CCP. In fact, our fundamental criticism of the CNA² is not that it supports the government but that it is dependent on the government. It is

a question of principle with us not to be part of such a state organization. On the other hand, in an organization that is dependent on the rank and file, we can disagree with the leadership but we will discuss our differences inside the organization. One point of difference that I have raised is on the character of our revolution. We say it must be a socialist revolution.

Q. What are your views on what is happening in Cuzco?

A. While they had named the Lares Agrarian League after me, in Cuzco it was being said that I was in Sinamos³ and with the FARTAC.⁴ Now the FARTAC and Sinamos are telling the peasants that since I went abroad, I reached an agreement with the Yankees to turn the land over to the big landowners. In addition, the ultraleftists and some leaders who fought us at the time of La Convención (1958-63) are now attacking us as supporters of Sinamos. They accuse the CCP of the same thing, of serving the government, and so on.

That is, among the peasantry of Cuzco there are two divisive forces. One is made up of the government supporters who, with money from Sinamos, create artificial organizations. The other is the ultraleftists, who try to lead an organization and if they can't, leave and form their "miniconfederation" with five peasants and five Quechua-speaking students. We are confident that the ranks of the peasantry will know how to defeat these two divisive forces.

Q. At the current time, when the reactionaries are mounting an anti-Communist offensive and the government is forming a defense front, what is your opinion on the goal of forming an anti-imperialist front?

A. There is talk of threats from the ultraright. You see the offensive against *Equis*, *Oiga*, and all those magazines. But I believe that the fight to defend the interests of the masses and the fight against a threatened right-wing coup follow the same course. That is, the way to fight against the

threat of a coup is to fight for a general amnesty, for the defense of the economic demands and democratic rights of the people. The fact that the government holds to its antidemocratic policies and continues repressing the people favors the putschist right wing. And if there is a coup it will be because the government paved the way for it.

The experience of history shows that bourgeois governments prefer to be eliminated by another, more reactionary bourgeois government rather than permit the masses to advance and radicalize. But that does not mean we should be sectarian toward people who follow the government and who believe what it says. To such persons we must raise demands that we can achieve together. If these people think that all their problems are caused by infiltrators, then they should help us to win and maintain democratic rights.

Moreover, we must overcome the sectarian stage in the building of fronts—where each party or group wants to impose its program on other groups and wants to maintain a ruinous hegemony over the front. It is much more correct to begin with two or three points. For example, the CCP is now raising the demand for a general amnesty—that is, freedom for the political and social prisoners; the rehiring of those fired; and trial courts. All of us who are in agreement with these three points should march together.

It is better to raise what we have in common and not try to get everyone to hold the same positions, since this will end up with the creation of as many fronts as there are parties. This does not mean there will be no ideological debate and political clarity. The CCP is carrying out united-front actions in an unsectarian way and I hope it will continue to do so. The unity of all forces will arise from these initial points to encompass other points, insofar as the dynamic of the struggle pushes the front onward.

With regard to the Frente de Defensa de la Revolución,⁵ it seems to me to be an organization to defend the positions of the government en bloc—as much against its rightist enemies as against the masses. If, for example, the FDR were for the defense of the 200 miles,⁶ or for things that had been nationalized not being returned, or for the haciendas not being returned to the big landowners, it seems to me that my party should be in that front. But that is not the case. To enter the FDR you have to be in agreement even with the tanks that attacked Querecotillo, with the entire policy of the government in general. □

1. Confederación Campesina del Perú (Peruvian Peasant Federation).

2. Confederación Nacional Agraria (National Agrarian Confederation).

3. Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social (National Network for Supporting Social Mobilization), the bureaucratic apparatus set up by the government to control the mass movement.

4. Federación Agraria Revolucionaria "Tupac Amaru II" del Cuzco (Tupac Amaru II Revolutionary Agrarian Federation of Cuzco).

5. FDR—Front for the Defense of the Revolution.

6. The 200-mile territorial limit.

AROUND THE WORLD



Egypt: Too Many Millionaires

Ahmed Methaly, a member of the Egyptian parliament, recently charged that the country now has more than 100 times as many millionaires as it did during the reign of the notoriously corrupt King Farouk. And this in a country that claims to be socialist.

According to a report in the January 11 *Washington Post*, Methaly said that under the ousted monarch there were only 4 millionaires, while today there are 500.

Galal Hamamsy, a columnist for the Cairo daily *Al Akhbar*, commented that "the cats could not grow fat unless they enjoyed the support of senior officials." It is widely known that Egypt's millionaires have lined their pockets through kickbacks on government contracts, currency speculation, and other state-related shenanigans.

This is why more than a few Egyptians are already skeptical about the thoroughness of a promised government inquiry into corruption and profiteering.

Justice Department: No Grounds for Prosecuting CIA Assassins

Justice Department lawyers have concluded that prosecutions for CIA assassination plots merit roughly the same attention as old parking tickets.

Department spokesman Robert Havel announced January 20 that its lawyers have determined that no federal laws were violated by Central Intelligence Agency officials involved in plots against foreign heads of state. "The law has been checked, and there's really no federal statute applicable to it," he said.

The plots—two of whose targets were Cuban Premier Fidel Castro and Congolese Premier Patrice Lumumba—amounted to a "dry hole," one Justice Department source told reporters.

Goldwater: CIA Inquiry Went Too Far

The Senate committee investigating the Central Intelligence Agency should have been more careful to limit the scope of its inquiries, steering clear particularly of the question of assassinations. That at least is the view of conservative Senator Barry Goldwater, expressed in an NBC television interview January 20.

"I begged [committee Chairman] Frank Church not to get into assassinations," Goldwater said. "I almost got on my knees,

because, I said, it's going to end up in one place, and that's the White House.

"I don't think there's any question at all that everything the C.I.A. did in the field of assassinations, for example, the President not only knew about it, but ordered it."

Told to Have His Head Examined

On another matter, Goldwater was asked in the same interview whether he thought former President Nixon was honest.

"No, I don't think so, and I think that was his trouble," Goldwater said. "I don't think he really ever told the truth about his connections with Watergate."

Goldwater said that when he once asked Nixon to tell the truth about Watergate, the president "got kind of mad at me."

Fighting in Oman Continues

Despite claims by Sultan Said bin Qabus that his British- and Iranian-supported forces had crushed the ten-year-old rebellion in Dhofar, reports of fighting near the Omani border continue. News reports have mentioned shelling of Omani positions by Soviet-supported forces in South Yemen, and in a January 14 dispatch from the border area, *New York Times* correspondent Eric Pace said that Dhofari insurgents were once again operating inside Oman.

"Oman's British-run air force has been hitting back at the mortarmen on this [Omani] side of the border," Pace reported.

According to Pace, more than 500 British mercenaries and regular servicemen, as well as 3,500 Iranian troops, remain in Oman. He said that the Omani military and police budget has hit \$500 million a year.

200 Dissidents Urge Kovalyov Release

An appeal issued January 9 by 58 jailed Soviet political prisoners and about 140 other dissidents demanded freedom for biologist Sergei Kovalyov, who was sentenced in December to ten years of forced labor and internal exile.

Kovalyov was an active member of the small Soviet chapter of Amnesty International. In December 1974, three months after Amnesty International officially chartered the group, he was arrested on charges of involvement in the writing and circulation of dissident materials.

During the year-long detention prior to

his trial, Kovalyov was allowed no visits by his wife or friends, and the Stalinist regime denied him the right to select a lawyer of his choice. During his trial in Vilnius, Lithuania, Kovalyov's friends and supporters were barred from the courtroom, including prominent Soviet dissident Andrei Sakharov. The Kremlin refused repeated requests to permit Amnesty International to send an observer to the trial.

Among the 200 dissidents signing the January 9 appeal for Kovalyov were Roy Medvedev and Andrei Amalrik.

Soviet authorities have also stepped up pressure against other members of the Amnesty International group. Dr. Andrei Tverdokhlebov, the group's secretary, is now awaiting trial and faces a possible three-year sentence. Its chairman, Dr. Valentin Turchin, has been fired from his job; repeatedly interrogated by the KGB, the Soviet secret police; and threatened with arrest.

Prices in Japan Spur Potato Sales

Inflation is taking a toll on the diet of the average person in Japan, according to figures in a nutrition survey released in December 1975 by the country's Welfare Ministry. Calorie intake alone dropped a little more than 4% between 1972 and 1974.

In fact, the intake of nutritious elements was down in every case except vitamin C. For example, in 1975 Japanese citizens consumed 7.2% less calcium and 0.4% less protein than in 1974. They ate 36% fewer vegetables and 15% less meat, but consumption of those oh-so-wholesome potatoes jumped 22%.

Bonn Restricts Free Speech, Press

Bonn has dealt another blow at the democratic rights of the West German population. On January 16 parliament unanimously approved measures that among other things make written or publicly spoken support of serious "crimes" punishable by fines or imprisonment.

The bill was introduced by the ruling Social Democratic party-Free Democratic party coalition. The opposition Christian Democratic party voted for the measures, complaining however that they are too lax. Critics of the law among the Social Democrats nonetheless voted for it, settling for a slight toning down of certain phrases.

Portugal: Lessons of the November 25 Coup Attempt

By Barry Sheppard

[The following article is based on a report on Portugal adopted by the National Committee of the Socialist Workers party January 3, 1976.]

* * *

The attempted coup of November 25, 1975, marked a turning point in the Portuguese revolution.

The strategies of the different tendencies claiming to represent the interests of the working class and socialism were put to the test by the events of those days.

The result of the adventure was to strengthen the hand of the capitalist government. In the wake of crushing the attempted coup the regime has stepped up its offensive against the working class. While it is proceeding cautiously out of fear of provoking a new upsurge, the government aims at restricting and pushing back the economic and political gains made by the Portuguese masses since the April 1974 coup that overthrew the Salazarist dictatorship.

What Actually Happened?

All the details of the attempted putsch are not yet known, although an outline of the events can be pieced together from the various reports.

The American Stalinists denied that there had been any coup attempt. Tom Foley, writing in the November 29 *Daily World*, said, "The Portuguese right, and their U.S. imperialist backers, are trying to justify their harsh actions by stating that this week's fighting was some kind of attempted military coup on the part of the left and the Communists. But any study of how events developed shows that it was the right which provoked the fighting, by insisting on establishing military control of Lisbon at any cost, including bloodshed."

On the other hand, the November 28 issue of *Workers' Power*, weekly newspaper of an American group called International Socialists (IS), carried the headline, "Portugal—All Power to the Workers!"

The lead story began: "The first shots in the Portuguese civil war have been fired. The lines have been drawn and there can be no turning back. It is only a matter of time.

"There is just one question left—who will win, the workers or their exploiters."

While the exploiters were certainly the decisive force involved in the November 25 events, the workers were most conspicuous by their absence. As is always the case in such adventures, the workers were spectators, not even consulted, much less involved.

The following week, *Workers' Power* printed a "correction." It seems they had been misinformed about what was actually happening by a telephone call from Lisbon. They did not indicate who was on the Portuguese end of the line.

The International Socialists in the United States, like their sister organization of the same name in Britain, politically identify with a group in Portugal called the Partido Revolucionário do Proletariado (PRP—Revolutionary party of the Proletariat). The PRP and the MES (Movimento de Esquerda Socialista—Movement of the Socialist Left) were the dominant groups in a coalition formed last August called the FUR (Frente de Unidade Revolucionária—Front for Revolutionary Unity).

On December 6, the British IS printed an account of what happened on November 25, based on information supplied by the PRP. "But how was the battle lost?" the IS asks.

"Already a myth is being pushed that the extreme left tried to stage a coup.

"The real sequence of events was rather different. The revolutionary left groups, the PRP and the MES, had been arguing that an insurrection was necessary to avoid the danger of another Chile.

"But they expected it only after some weeks of building support for it in the factories.

"However, on the night of 24-25 November, right-wing military figures made a number of provocative moves—putting commandos outside the military police barracks and removing Otelo de Carvalho from his command for being too tolerant at the left.

"The paratroops, who had only just come over to the left, seized airbases and the main radio station in retaliation. The authorities are now claiming that 'elements of the Communist Party and the extreme left participated in the rebellion.'

"But when the paras moved, the revolutionary groups were as surprised as everyone else. The CP seems to have been directly involved. It issued an hysterical call for 'vigilance' and bodies it influenced

called people to the barracks. Only after these calls had been made did the revolutionary left join the movement.

"Late on Tuesday morning [November 25], Fifth Division officers sympathetic to the Communist Party visited the PRP offices to persuade them to join in.

"However, at that point the CP did an about-turn and abandoned to the fury of the right those who had followed its initiative—including some of its own key people in the armed forces.

"The marines, who had initially supported the paras, withdrew to the sidelines. CP-influenced officers in key military units began negotiating for surrender, creating general demoralisation.

"The Metal Workers' union [CP-controlled], which had called for a general strike on Tuesday, did nothing to work for it the next day. The Intersyndical, the CP-led trade union federation, did nothing. A CP leaflet called for 'serenity.'

"Suddenly, the left wing soldiers and the revolutionary groups found themselves isolated.

"The left wing army units were divided and confused. Although they were opposed by at most 1000 right wing commandos, the CP-influenced officers advised surrender.

"But why did the CP leadership do a somersault that amounted to nothing more than betrayal of its own military supporters?

"The rumour in Lisbon is that, at the height of the rebellion, Cunhal, the leader of the CP, made contact with the President of the Republic.

"Jointly they agreed that the CP would be allowed to remain in the government, providing it would oppose strikes in future and would work with the government to clamp down on the revolutionary left.

"Certainly, the evening the revolt was crushed, Melo Antunes, one of the leading 'moderates,' appeared on TV to say that the CP should still be in the government.

"The tragedy was that the revolutionary left did not have the foresight to see the scale of the treachery, nor the strength in the factories to gain support for the soldiers once the CP had changed sides."

The Government Sets a Trap

Both Foley in the *Daily World* and the PRP account point to a "provocation" by

the sixth provisional government that led to the adventure. The events leading up to November 25 indicate that the regime did indeed do just that.

Early in November, a demonstration by construction workers surrounded the Palácio de São Bento, trapping Premier José Pinheiro de Azevedo inside until he granted their demands for higher wages. This massive, militant demonstration was the first action on that scale to challenge the government's austerity program.

General Otelio Saraiva de Carvalho, head of the military security forces and commander of the Lisbon military region, refused to send troops to clear the construction workers away. Carvalho's personal reasons for doing so may have had something to do with his attempts to refurbish his "leftist" image. Indeed, he had by then apparently allied himself with the Communist party. But the facts are that any attempt to send radicalized troops against the massive construction workers' demonstration could have failed and run the risk of triggering a reaction in wider layers of the working class and among the soldiers. The government was interested in provoking the kind of thing that happened on November 25, not a confrontation with the working class itself.

The government was forced to give in to the construction workers' demands. This encouraged other workers, in the face of soaring inflation and unemployment, to begin to challenge the austerity program. A demonstration called by Lisbon-area workers commissions under CP leadership on November 16 drew 100,000 people, perhaps more.

Leaders of the Socialist party, which plays a major role in the sixth provisional government, had been issuing warnings against a "leftist" coup attempt. They were aided in this by the calls, for the previous month, of the PRP and MES for an "insurrection." The government made plans to shift communications from Lisbon to the northern part of the country.

Azevedo and other key ministers in the government, including the SP ministers, claimed they could not govern, and suspended official activity. Then the Council of the Revolution, the military body that wields real power in Portugal, meeting the night of November 24-25, ordered Carvalho dismissed as the Lisbon region commander. As Foley and the PRP indicate, the government knew this would be interpreted as a provocation to the CP and the groups of the self-styled "revolutionary left." The removal of Carvalho signified a further reduction in the power of the "leftist" officers, that is, those who sought part of their support from the CP and even the groups in the FUR.

The "leftist" officers fell into the trap. The CP issued a call for a mobilization against a "shift to the right" during the

night. Although its actual involvement in the planning of the coup attempt is unclear, the CP certainly did not mobilize the forces it controls for a concerted attempt at taking power.

During the night, the paratroopers, under orders from first sergeants, many of whom were pro-CP, seized four air force bases. The paratroopers' spokesperson demanded that Carvalho be retained, and that Gen. José Morais e Silva be removed from the air force command.

Pro-CP officers of the Fifth Division marched into the television stations. Along with them was the former head of the national television network under the previous regime headed by Gen. Vasco Gonçalves. He announced that "People's Power is giving the orders now."

The PRP and other groups in the FUR were apparently taken by surprise. Only after they heard the appeals from "bodies [the CP] influenced" did "the revolutionary left join the movement," according to the information from the PRP. It must have been at this point that the American IS received that telephone call from Lisbon.

The paratroopers, up until a few weeks before, had been known as among the most conservative units in the armed forces. They were among the units that Gen. António de Spínola relied on for his abortive right-wing coup attempt on March 11, 1975.

The paratroopers had been used by the government on November 7 to blow up the transmitters of Rádio Renascença, a station occupied by oppositionists who had used it to mobilize demonstrations with demands aimed against the sixth government. The rank-and-file paratroopers reacted against being used this way, and claimed that the government had tricked them. They also became apprehensive that they were about to be demobilized, which means being pushed into the army of the unemployed in today's Portugal.

Report From a Rank-and-File Paratrooper

Paratroopers at the Tancos air base had removed their officers about two weeks before November 25. In an interview published in the December 6 issue of *Combate Socialista*, the weekly newspaper of the Trotskyist Revolutionary Workers party in Portugal, one of the Tancos paratroopers explained how this happened (a translation of the full interview is contained in the January 26 issue of *Intercontinental Press*):

"[Morais e Silva] came [to the base] to explain the case of Rádio Renascença, to say that this was an order and could not be discussed. It was the draftees who attended the meeting with Morais e Silva. They were taken there by the officers. Almost all the privates were there who had been in the general assembly. The crowd began to boo Morais e Silva, to say that they were sick of

him, that they already knew what he thought, that they didn't want to hear anything more, and that they wouldn't let him keep on trying to deceive the paratroopers.

"Then, he said the paratroopers had three choices—to support the sixth government unconditionally, to support a leftist minority, or to forget about politics. Finally, when he was leaving, he said: 'The paratroop corps is going to be done away with soon.'

"So, all the officers left; we drove them out. We were on alert. The same night we got information that the barracks was going to be flattened, and so we stayed at the ready. This was the background for everything that happened later, for the position of the privates and the first sergeants who wanted to drive out Morais e Silva and Pinho Freire [the second in command of the air force]."

Most of these newly radicalized paratroopers did not know they were participating in a coup attempt when they began their action. The same paratrooper reports:

"The occupation was carried out at night [November 24-25]. In the preceding days, there had been no general assemblies. The personnel rushed to the bases. 'We are going to get rid of Morais e Silva,' that was the idea. But it was certainly part of a putsch attempt. The first sergeants knew about it. They were the ones who gave the orders. And they were also the first ones to leave Tancos on Thursday night [November 27]. First sergeants influenced by the CP were involved.

"We were surprised by the coup. 'A coup, but what we wanted was to get rid of Morais e Silva, and the men knew nothing about this.' If we had been sure we had the support of the population, we were ready to go right to Lisbon, to throw out the sixth government, Mário Soares, Alvaro Cunhal, and all the rest of the government who aren't doing anybody any good. If the population had been ready to move ahead, if they had supported it—but this was a struggle for the working masses. We did not go to carry out a coup. Besides, we knew very well that the military personnel in the northern and central regions were with the sixth government. In addition, some paratroopers also supported the sixth government. It would have been lunacy to stage a coup.

"Then, when we saw that we did not have the support of anyone, we thought: 'We are alone. OK, let's throw them out.' Before this we never thought about overthrowing the government."

With the advantage of hindsight, the paratrooper continues: "We knew that it was not a good government; we were against it. But a thousand paratroopers are not going to overthrow a government. After falling into an error—I think it was adventurism to occupy bases to get rid of Morais e

Silva—we were inclined to push ahead.”

But by November 28, “everybody was already leaving. There was a total demobilization, which had been started by the sergeants. The men were demoralized. (‘Before they [the sergeants] supported this; it was they who started it. And now they are running away.’) There were also paratroopers who did not want to fight or shed blood, and they began to leave. Fewer and fewer men were left. And then we held a general assembly: ‘We’ve lost, let’s go home. There’s no possibility to continue the struggle.’”

Once the paratroopers’ action began, units under “leftist” control took action. The Lisbon military police took control of several buildings. The Lisbon Light Artillery Regiment on the outskirts of the city set up armored vehicles and recoilless rifles to guard the northern approaches to the city. Carvalho’s military security command took control of the national radio station.

The Trap Shuts

The move by these pro-CP and “far left” officers was what the government had anticipated and was waiting for. The military Council of the Revolution, with the support of the SP leadership, moved swiftly to close their trap. Using commandos that had been tested in a number of situations for their reliability, the regime swiftly put down the challenge, isolated the paratroopers, and waited for their surrender. “People’s Power” wasn’t able to give very many orders after all.

The workers had basically nothing to do with the whole affair. They observed from the sidelines.

The CP, seeing how things were going and never intending a confrontation with the main force of the military, reversed engines, called off the mobilization of its followers and the unions it leads, and issued appeals for “serenity.”

The government was able to present its emergency measures against freedom of the press, assembly, and other democratic rights as a defense of “democracy” against a minority putsch.

The regime moved quickly to strike other blows for capitalist “law and order.” A state of siege was proclaimed for six days, with the military empowered to make summary arrests. Military courts were established to deal with “crimes against the public order.” Meetings and demonstrations were prohibited, and censorship imposed.

The government announced a wage freeze that, among other things, annuls the victory of the construction workers on the wage front.

Political parties were banned from the armed forces in a drive to restore traditional hierarchical discipline.

In one fell swoop the government was

able to regain the initiative against the workers. The upsurge in the workers’ determination to fight for their basic needs evidenced in the construction workers’ demonstration was cut short.

On December 20, Azevedo called for “voluntary and conscious acceptance of sacrifices.” In a television speech three days later he warned that “unrealistic wage claims and overemployment had caused many enterprises to close.”

Since it came to power in April 1974, under all the various provisional governments, the military, with the support of its CP and SP allies, has been trying to force the masses to pay for the capitalist economic crisis. At one point this objective was cloaked in the demagogic call to win the “battle for production.” Now Azevedo states the same objective more openly, talking about “overemployment” at a time when 13 percent of the work force is unemployed.

The government removed subsidies on essential goods, with a resultant jump in prices, while it clamped down on wages. The price of eggs leaped 33 percent, potatoes 21 percent, and carrots 140 percent, according to an article in the January 11 *New York Times*. The price of public transportation has gone up 100 percent, and gasoline 40 percent.

Another aspect of the government’s offensive was manifested January 9 when it announced that the land-reform program would not be applied at all in the northern two-thirds of Portugal, nor in parts of the South.

The regime also launched new attacks on the rights of assembly and protest. To test its repressive options it chose the occasion of a January 1 demonstration in Oporto called to demand the release of 140 persons arrested in the wake of the November 25 adventure.

Members of the Republican National Guard opened fire on the crowd of 3,000, killing three and wounding many others. A similar demonstration in Lisbon was broken up by commandos driving armored cars and firing over the heads of the crowd.

The regime’s use of the Republican National Guard, a paramilitary police force known for its right-wing character, was hardly accidental. A report from Oporto in the January 3 *Washington Post* pointed out, “A massive recruitment campaign for 10,000 extra men is being boosted by television commercials.”

The latest probe in the regime’s offensive against the working class came on January 13 when the ruling Council of the Revolution proposed a plan that would ensure continued military rule in Portugal until 1980. In a dispatch from Lisbon in the January 18 *Washington Post*, Bernard Nossiter said that “the military plan would enable the Council to dissolve the elected legislature and veto many of its decrees on

everything from nationalization through foreign affairs to defense.

“To be sure, this blueprint is not the last word. The civilian political parties are examining it and their agreement must be obtained before it becomes effective. They are likely to insist on a reduced military role and should gain some concessions. But in the end, it appears the power will rest where it has been, with the men who made the coup of April 25, 1974.”

So far, the CP leadership has remained a strong supporter of continued military rule. Socialist party chief Mário Soares was quoted in the January 18 *New York Times* as opposed to the plan. “The new proposal is antidemocratic and consecrates military guardianship over our political life,” he said. But the SP leaders have strongly supported the capitalist offensive that has prepared the way for this latest attack.

Rightist forces have been emboldened to organize more openly. In January, the regime released from prison key hangmen of the Salazarist regime.

Blow to Workers

It is the workers who have suffered most from the November 25 adventure of the pro-CP and “far left” officers. A number of points highlighted by November 25 fix the blame for that primarily on the leaderships of the Socialist and Communist parties. The forces that consider themselves the “revolutionary left” also share a large part of the blame.

The “leftist” officers who carried out the adventure were not demanding a workers government to replace the capitalist regime. They demanded only the retention of the command of a “leftist” officer, Carvalho, and the dismissal of Morais e Silva. The logic of their challenge, if successful, would have been to recompose the Council of the Revolution and the government, putting different officers, with ties to the CP, in key positions. This would amount to returning to a situation similar to the one during the fifth provisional government last summer under Gonçalves, in which the CP played the role of favored junior partner to the Armed Forces Movement (MFA).

It was not an attempt to establish a government that excluded bourgeois political forces such as the MFA and the Democratic People’s party (PPD—Partido Popular Democrático), a government that would represent the interests of the working class and poor peasants.

The November 25 adventure, therefore, was not an attempt to go beyond the policy of class collaborationism followed by both the Stalinists and the Social Democrats. Both have sought to keep the workers they influence subordinated to the military, while they vie with each other to prove how indispensable they are to the Portuguese capitalist class.

Faced with the upsurge of the Portuguese masses following the April 1974 overthrow of the Salazarist dictatorship, the Portuguese capitalist class found itself in a weak political position. Virtually the only force to emerge from the old regime with credibility among the masses was the Armed Forces Movement. The MFA was the political arm of the rebellious officer caste.

From the beginning the aim of the MFA was not to overthrow capitalism and begin the construction of socialism. Quite the opposite, as is now apparent for all to see.

The MFA cultivated the image of being above the classes, in a bonapartist fashion. As the radicalization deepened both among the civilian population and in the armed forces, it was compelled to adopt correspondingly more "socialist" and "anti-imperialist" rhetoric in order to maintain support. It combined attempts at selective repression with concessions and demagogic promises to the masses.

There have been sharp divisions and conflicts within the MFA over how much to use either the carrot or the stick at each stage. Sections of the MFA became identified with either the Socialist or the Communist party, or the bourgeois parties. Officers like the president, Gen. Costa Gomes, succeeded in maintaining an appearance of being "above it all" while using all these forces and shifting among them. Throughout, the MFA remained a *capitalist* political instrument.

Arrogating to itself the role of bonapartist arbiter of the class struggle, the MFA more and more needed arbitration to settle its own internal differences. The struggles within the MFA always carried an implicit threat of violence from the contending factions. There were even two right-wing coup attempts (September 1974 and March 1975) and now an attempted "leftist" coup. More and more power has been delegated by the MFA to the much smaller Council of the Revolution. Today, all key decisions are taken by the council, without formal consultation with the 200 or so officers of the MFA general assembly.

The real power in Portugal has remained in the hands of the military. The various provisional governments were set up mainly to draw in the support of one or another or both of the major working-class parties, the SP and the CP. The policy of the leaders of both parties has been to practice coalitionism with this bourgeois military scheme, blocking the thrust of the workers toward forming their own government.

One of the objectives of the military regime was to divide the working class, in order to progressively demoralize and demobilize the workers and dispel the threat of united action that could lead toward a socialist revolution.

To this end, the MFA worked to set the Communist and Socialist parties against

each other. The policy of both of vying to be the favored junior partner with the military played right into its hands.

At first, the military leaned more on the CP. The Stalinists had an effective apparatus, which they put at the service of the MFA. The CP became the labor policemen for the military, portraying the "battle for production" as in the interests of the workers and socialism.

In return, the regime supported the Stalinists' position in the labor movement. For example, the Trade Union Unity Law passed early in 1975 froze CP control of the union structure.

Before the elections to the Constituent Assembly last April, both the SP and CP signed a "pact" with the military, guaranteeing that military rule would continue. In the vote, the SP and CP together got a majority. The vote for the bourgeois parties was a distinct minority. The SP received the highest vote of any party, 38 percent. The election results reflected the desire of the masses for socialism.

In response to the setback suffered by the capitalist forces in the election, the MFA launched a demagogic campaign against the Constituent Assembly as merely a "bourgeois democratic" institution.

The MFA began to promulgate a program for what they called "people's power," which would supposedly be a higher form of democracy than the Constituent Assembly. This plan called for the creation of "people's assemblies" under the control of the MFA. The plan itself was never implemented.

At the same time, the MFA sought to deepen the division in the working class by denouncing the SP, charging it with being the "main danger" to socialism. The Stalinists became supporters and organizers of this campaign. They passed off their low vote relative to the SP as simply an example of the evil results to be expected from "bourgeois democracy" and attacked the Constituent Assembly in favor of the MFA's fake "people's power" plan. They even resurrected the old Stalinist charge of the early 1930s that the SP was "social fascist."

Attack on Democratic Rights

The CP gave full support to the takeover of the newspaper *República* from its Socialist party editors. Then it unsuccessfully attempted, along with the MFA and the "far left," to block mass mobilizations called by the SP to protest the government's restrictions on democratic rights, including the takeover of its newspaper.

The popularity of the Stalinists had already dropped, as was shown by its vote for the Constituent Assembly, about 13 percent of the total. In large measure, this could be attributed to its support for speedup in the plants. Over the course of last summer, as it stepped up its campaign

against the SP and against the democratic rights of the majority of workers who supported the SP, its popularity dropped further. As this happened, the CP began to rely more and more on the MFA to defend its positions in the labor movement. Its stance was that the "socialist revolution" would be made by a minority—by the CP in alliance with the MFA—against the "moderate majority" of workers who supported the SP.

The CP's campaign for the "battle of production" and against democratic rights helped pave the way for restoration of one of the props of capitalist rule—the fear of the masses that socialism constitutes a threat to their rights and subjugation to a tyrannical machine.

The Stalinist campaign played into the hands of reactionary forces. For the first time since the April 1974 overturn, rightists at the end of July and in August were able to mobilize mobs that attacked and burned CP headquarters, especially in the North.

The SP leadership saw a good issue being handed to them. Radicalized workers and petty bourgeoisie more and more turned to the SP as a result of the Stalinist campaign. In July, the SP resigned from the government. It did this not out of revolutionary desire to defend the democratic rights of the masses, under attack by a capitalist government; nor was its intention to fight for a class break with the MFA, for a united front of the workers in defense of their rights and interests against the capitalists.

The SP leadership's goal was to further its own campaign to displace the CP as the dominant workers party in the coalition government.

Under the impact of the mobilizations of SP workers and supporters, the MFA decided to make a shift. At the end of August, officers most closely identified with the CP, such as the premier, General Gonçalves, were dumped from the ruling Council of the Revolution and officers favoring at least a temporary alliance with the SP were elevated. Along with this change in the composition of the top MFA body, a new—the sixth—provisional government of collaboration with Portuguese capital was installed. The CP was reduced to a token role, with the major role of junior partner of the military being filled by the SP.

The Sixth Provisional Government

The new government made new efforts to implement the military's austerity program. Like its predecessors it called for capitalist law and order in the factories and barracks.

But the continuing revolutionary dynamic hindered their plan. Early in September, there were demonstrations by soldiers in an organization called Soldiers United Will Win (SUV). It was organized independently of MFA control. The SUV, while embracing

only a small minority of soldiers, reflected the continuing radicalization among the rank and file, which was leading toward greater breakdown of military discipline.

The militant demonstration by construction workers in November indicated growing willingness of the workers to fight for their interests.

The CP leadership gave support to one degree or another to the SUV demonstrations, the action by the construction workers, and the mass mobilization November 16 that was called by the Lisbon workers commissions under CP leadership.

The CP's oppositional stance, like the SP's during the summer, provided openings for the masses. Its support to the construction workers, for example, ran directly counter to its policy, up through the fifth government, of opposing such struggles in the interests of the "battle for production."

But its support to mobilizations against the sixth provisional government did not signal any break with its policy of subordination to the military. The Stalinists did not call during these actions for a class break with all bourgeois forces, including the MFA. On the contrary, they called for a return of Vasco Gonçalves, in essence a return to the fifth provisional government.

Thus the November 25 adventure occurred within the framework of the rivalry between the CP and SP leaders as to which could better sell out the workers to the military regime.

The FUR Bears Responsibility

The groups that call themselves the "revolutionary left" share responsibility with the Stalinists and Social Democrats for the grave setback that the November 25 events and their aftermath have meant for the workers.

The largest of these groups are the PRP and the MES. But far from being the "revolutionary left," they are at best centrist formations. Their political positions are class collaborationist, presented in revolutionary-sounding phrases. Their course oscillates between, and combines, rank opportunism and adventurous actions.

An element that remains constant in their politics is sectarian contempt for the majority of workers who still follow the CP or SP. They place their own concerns above the needs of the great masses.

It was these groups that dominated the FUR formed last August. In addition to the centrists, the FUR included a CP front organization, the Portuguese Democratic Movement. The FUR was formed on the opportunist basis of critical support to the fifth provisional government.

The Internationalist Communist League, a Trotskyist organization with an ultraleftist bent, also joined the FUR. While it criticized the support to a capitalist govern-

ment, it held that this was secondary to the importance of the organization of the FUR itself. The other Trotskyist group in Portugal, the Revolutionary Workers party, opposed the FUR because of its class collaborationism.

The reasons the "super-leftists" had for supporting the fifth provisional government were different from those of the Stalinists, however. Their view was that a "left" MFA government of "revolutionary unity" should be set up in place of the sixth government. This government would then turn power over to the "workers organized in a structure that culminates in a National Peoples Assembly," as the PRP put it in the November 21 issue of its paper.

The MES declared about the same time, "We must create the conditions for the formation of a government of revolutionary unity that holds power until the creation of the National Peoples Assembly."

This schema amounts to placing faith in a "left" capitalist government to turn power over to the workers.

To understand this reactionary utopia, we have to back up a bit and examine the centrists' ideas of building "soviets."

These groups presented a false picture of the real extent of the formation of soviets, or workers councils, in Portugal.

The workers commissions that appeared in the period following the fall of the old dictatorship were primarily a response to the need for economic organizations representing all the workers in an enterprise, a need that the workers felt acutely because of the fragmentation of the trade-union-type organizations of workers under the dictatorship. These bodies have generally remained in the framework of organizations of economic struggle, and have not functioned as soviets. They do not as a matter of course discuss and act on the broad social and political questions before the working class and its allies.

The workers commissions have been further limited and weakened by the deep division in the working class. They tend to be dominated by one or another of the political tendencies, and utilized by them in their rivalry. In many cases, their character as united-front committees of all the workers has been virtually destroyed.

Some of the centrist groups have set up their own "soviets," which are little more than caucuses of their own supporters. The neighborhood commissions are even more fragmented—sometimes even giving rise to several commissions in the same neighborhood—each dominated by a different tendency.

The most advanced revolutionary-democratic forms of organization that have yet appeared in Portugal were the assemblies and committees of soldiers and sailors that sprang up at certain times in various units. However, they did not become stand-

ing committees on a national scale.

Thus, dual power—a situation where organs of a soviet or council type emerge out of united-front action committees, embrace the masses of workers, and begin to function as centers of authority and power on all economic and social questions, parallel to and competing with the government—has not existed in Portugal up to now.

The revolutionary phrasemongers made propaganda for "building soviets" the axis of their work, without regard for the major political obstacles to building united workers' actions that could lead toward the creation of genuine council-type organizations. This led the PRP to set up its own sectarian "soviets," and made the centrists easy game for the MFA's "people's power" demagoguery.

Will the Capitalist Government Bring Socialism?

When the MFA announced its "people's power" plan during the summer, the centrist groups thought it had come over to their position on building "soviets." On July 16, the "far left" of the centrists, ultralefts, and Maoists organized a demonstration in support of "people's power" that marched on the Constituent Assembly under the slogans, "MFA—People's Power" and "Dissolve the Constituent Assembly."

In this campaign of support to the MFA, the centrists played the role of "leftist" cat's-paws for the Stalinists. The majority of the Portuguese toilers, for whom the elections to the Constituent Assembly were the first and only national elections they had been allowed to participate in for five decades, could only interpret this campaign as directed against their interests and rights.

By counterposing "MFA—People's Power" to the Constituent Assembly they not only reinforced illusions that the MFA would lead the struggle for socialism. They presented the idea that workers democracy, socialist democracy, is contradictory to defending and extending the democratic rights that the workers wrest from the employing class under capitalism.

The Socialist party workers could only interpret the campaign to abolish the Constituent Assembly as being aimed against them, because their party had won a strong plurality in the elections.

The "revolutionary contingent" of centrist, Maoist, and ultraleft groups supported a Stalinist campaign that resulted in strengthening the hand of the reactionary and bourgeois forces generally, as well as the class-collaborationist leadership of the SP.

These sectarians failed in general to understand the relation between bourgeois democracy, workers democracy, and socialist revolution. To them, Lenin's injunction

that the proletarian revolution "... means a gigantic, world-historic extension of democracy, its transformation from falsehood into truth, the liberation of humanity from the shackles of capital, which distorts and truncates any, even the most 'democratic' and republican, bourgeois democracy" remains a mystery. (*Collected Works*, Vol. 28, p. 371, emphasis in original.)

During the summer they joined the Stalinist campaign against democratic rights. They supported an attack on the real rights of a workers party under a bourgeois regime in the *República* case, claiming that was the road to workers control of production. They called for the capitalist military regime to abolish the Constituent Assembly, seeing that as the road to soviet democracy.

And, they placed confidence in the ability and willingness of at least a wing of the MFA to lead the way to socialism. This leaves out the fact that the transition from a bourgeois regime to one of workers democracy takes place through a revolution that dismantles the capitalist state apparatus and replaces it with the new power of a workers state—and that it is a fatal illusion to think this step will be carried out by a section of the capitalist state apparatus, no matter how much its spokespeople talk of "people's power."

This was the background to the goal of the PRP and MES during the fall: Form a "government of revolutionary unity that holds power until the creation of the National People's Assembly."

Sectarianism

The groups that dominated the FUR combined this rank opportunism with extreme sectarianism and adventurism. They attacked the Socialist party as a "phase in the transition to fascism," and called for an insurrection against the sixth provisional government.

Early in November, the MES wrote: "Thus, the Social Democratic forces serve the advance of the fascist forces; consequently, we cannot separate our slogan 'Death to the ELP [Exército de Libertação Portuguesa—Portuguese Liberation Army, a right-wing terrorist group] and those who support it' from the slogan, 'Down with Social Democracy.' That, comrades, is why the MES says—and this is ever more correct and appears ever more clearly—that the Social Democracy is a phase in the transition to fascism."

This sectarian campaign, cavalierly contemptuous of the working class, also throws further light on just what the small centrist groups mean by "soviets." Their concept has nothing whatever to do with real soviets, which arise out of united-front struggle committees.

Their campaign was to "centralize" commissions and committees that had

become little more than organized supporter groups of one or another Stalinist or centrist tendency.

Their campaign was part of a political offensive that blocked the development of united-front struggle against the capitalist government and cut across the formation of genuine workers councils to organize and generalize these struggles.

Soviets or workers councils represent the highest form of the united front—they seek to embrace all the workers, of all tendencies, lead them in action against the enemy class, and provide an arena where all the tendencies in the workers movement can try to win a majority to their proposals.

But the "revolutionary" new leftists of the FUR had renounced the united front in practice through their sectarian campaign against the majority of the workers that support the Socialist party.

Real soviets can be built only on the basis of fighting to unite the working class in struggle around concrete issues and demands, not by calling for the "centralization" of organizations that the majority of workers have no confidence in.

Adventurism

The FUR leaders have a utopian-sectarian conception of a *minority revolution*. They had consigned the majority of workers to the extreme right. The British supporters of the PRP express this view openly. In a recent press statement, the British IS declared, "We completely disagree with those, like [the French] Lutte Ouvriere, who pin their hopes on co-operation—on whatever level—with the Portuguese Socialist Party. It is Mario Soares who is attempting to organise gangs of storm-troopers . . . to drown the revolution in blood. It is the PS, *leadership and membership*, who cheer the blowing up of the Radio Renascença transmitter—symbol of workers control." (Emphasis added.)

The petty-bourgeois revolutionists of the FUR *do not believe* that the fundamental job in Portugal remains that of winning the majority of workers from the policy of the class-collaborationist leaders of the SP and CP and from illusions in the MFA.

They *reject* the Marxist view that this must be accomplished before the question of power can be placed on the agenda. They believe that the determined action of a "militant minority" can spark the majority into action or bring it to give tacit support to their "insurrection."

Related to this is an incorrect view of the role of the soldiers. The PRP and MES saw the radicalization that developed among the soldiers and that deepened in the fall period as a sufficient basis for revolution. If the revolutionary soldiers made a bold move, the workers would support them.

This was especially so since, in the

impressionist view of the FUR leaders, the government was powerless. On November 10 PRP leader Isabel do Carmo declared at a press conference: "For us, at this moment, there is no solution except armed insurrection. As all history shows, the bourgeoisie unleashes a civil war every time it wants to defend its interests. Fortunately, the forces of the right possess no army in Portugal."

The PRP's Views on November 25

The PRP version of the adventure itself indicates these elements in the centrists' policy. Nowhere does the PRP criticize the class-collaborationist objectives of the rebelling officers. Its criticisms are technical, not political.

The statement printed by the British IS quoted earlier indicates that the PRP and MES would have carried through the attempt if they were stronger, even against the CP: "The tragedy was that the revolutionary left did not have the foresight to see the scale of the treachery, nor the strength in the factories to gain support for the soldiers once the CP had changed sides."

Here again we see a reversal of the real relation between the workers and soldiers in a genuine revolution. In his *History of the Russian Revolution*, Trotsky took issue with those who "portray Bolshevism as a soldier movement."

Trotsky answers: "Fundamental historic facts were here ignored: the fact that the proletariat was the first to come over to the Bolsheviks; that the Petrograd workers were showing the road to the workers of all countries; that the garrison and front much longer than the workers remained bulwarks of compromise; that the Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks created all kinds of privileges for the soldier at the expense of the worker in the soviet system, struggled against the arming of the workers and incited the soldiers against them; that the break in the troops was brought about only by the influence of the workers; that at the decisive moment the leadership of the soldiers was in the hands of the workers. . . ."

Their Criticisms

The complaints of the PRP and MES about November 25 are that they were not informed of the attempt and thus not prepared, and that they needed "some weeks" more to build support in the factories for the "insurrection." Their self-criticism is that they should have had enough "foresight" to see that the Stalinists are treacherous!

The CP did apparently turn its back on the forces it helped set in motion on November 25, which compounds their criminal role in the whole affair. But the FUR muddleheads themselves believed the CP was capable of following a revolution-

ary course and helped foster illusions in the Stalinists.

In early November, the MES wrote: "It is not the 'revolutionary left' that is being dragged in the wake of the Communist party, but the Communist party that, since giving support to the COPCON document systematically at decisive moments of the struggle, has been dragged in the wake of the revolutionary left."

Copcon was the military security force headed by Carvalho, which was disbanded following the crushing of the November 25 adventure. The Copcon document was drafted last August as a demagogic proposal from this section of the armed forces as a plan for building "people's power" committees under MFA control. Support to this document was a fundamental aspect of the FUR's platform.

The Road Forward

The military is using the moment to assert its authority and make as many inroads on the gains of the workers as it can. How far this process will go depends upon the response of the masses. The workers have not been defeated, nor have their organizations been dismantled. As the demonstration of the construction workers showed, there is deep opposition to the MFA's policy of forcing the working class to bear the brunt of the soaring inflation and unemployment.

The workers are cautious and confused in the aftermath of the coup attempt. It remains to be seen how and when they will regather their forces for a new rise of struggles capable of upsetting the plans of the regime to reestablish capitalist law and order.

The SP and CP leaderships have renewed their pledge of loyalty to the military in the wake of the coup attempt. The sectarian schemes and revolutionary phrasemongering of the FUR have been exposed as barren and only capable of leading to adventures and a demoralizing dead end for the Portuguese workers.

In the forefront of a revolutionary strategy in Portugal must be the campaign to mobilize the workers and their allies in united actions in defense of their basic interests, their economic gains, and their democratic rights. This united front is necessary to overcome the bitter sectarian divisions in the working class, to strengthen the defense of the workers against the growing threat from the bonapartist regime, and to prepare the ground for a new wave of upsurge of the toiling masses.

The revolutionary process has not reached the point where forms of workers power have emerged. What have appeared are sporadic and scattered mass initiatives, factory committees, and elements of workers control. These developments point the

way toward the emergence of broader action committees and eventually dual power. Progress along this road hinges on a correct political course. The fundamental political task is to break the workers from the basic class-collaborationist course of the Stalinists and Social Democrats of subordination to the Armed Forces Movement. Instead they must assert their right to put a government in power that represents and fights for *their* interests, a workers and peasants government.

The strategic line of march of the revolutionary struggle of the workers and their allies in Portugal at the present stage can be summarized as follows:

1. Defense of the gains of the workers and other layers of the masses against the attempts by the capitalist government to make the workers bear the cost of inflation and unemployment. This includes fighting for a crash government program for jobs, for a reduction in the hours of work without any reduction in pay to spread the available work, and for escalator provisions in union contracts to protect the workers from capitalist-caused inflation.

The struggle of the construction workers illustrates both the need for a determined fight on this front and the potential for workers to be mobilized in struggle on these issues.

Included in the demands to be raised are those for a radical agrarian reform designed to meet the needs of the small peasants, as well as the promotion of state-assisted cooperatives and state farms in the area of extensive farming. Demands for state support for the individual small peasants have become especially acute, as the policy of the capitalist government, with the support of the CP and SP leaderships, has become identified with "socialism," pushing many of the small farmers into the hands of the right wing.

In addition, special attention is needed to defend the rights and gains that have been won by women and by the youth and to support the struggles they launch.

2. The struggle for democratic rights in the armed forces. The MFA is attempting to use the adventurist coup attempt of November 25 to clamp down on all democratic rights of the soldiers and sailors. Rejecting sectarian and putschist propaganda, the rank-and-file soldiers need to organize to defend their civil rights. The broad masses must be educated that citizens in uniform retain every basic right to organize themselves and participate in the political life of the country.

3. Defense of the democratic rights of the citizen-soldiers is closely linked to defense of democratic rights and democratic decision-making in every area of social life. The political rights of most of the workers organizations have come under attack at various times since April 1974, including

the rights of both mass reformist parties. Now the MFA is using the adventurist coup attempt to strike additional blows against democratic rights. The principle of solidarity of the entire workers movement against such attacks is yet to be established.

4. Opposition to any attempts by the capitalist government to intervene in the affairs of the former colonies.

5. The struggle for effective workers organizations. The workers commissions and nuclei of industrial unions that have developed are still not adequate on a national scale to effectively defend the elementary interests of the workers. In this situation, propaganda and agitation for industrial unions, a united and democratic union structure, free of government interference such as the Trade Union Unity Law, and the transformation of the workers commissions into united-front-type action committees that can mobilize and represent the workers and poor masses in the industrial centers combine closely with other revolutionary tasks.

The fight for workers control under present conditions also fits in with these tasks. The workers have already asserted control in many instances to protect their specific interests in the face of government assaults, employer sabotage, and mounting unemployment and inflation. Workers control is necessary to obtain the economic information and organization to defend jobs, to prevent the flight of capital, to fight inflation, and to administer a sliding scale of wages and hours.

Workers control cannot serve its purpose unless workers make clear that they do not accept any responsibility for the functioning of the economy until they have real political power over it. This means fighting against the "workers control" promulgated by the military government and supported by the CP and SP leaderships, which amounts to workers disciplining themselves to accept the capitalists' austerity program.

6. The struggle for a workers and peasants government. On the political level, the workers in their great majority look for leadership to the Socialist party, the Communist party, and the Intersindical, the trade-union federation. At present no alternative to these mass organizations has credibility among large layers of workers. Nor can any alternative develop except as the masses learn in practice the limitations of the current class-collaborationist leaderships of these organizations.

Concretely, at the current stage, the slogan for a workers and peasants government means calling upon the Socialist and Communist parties, as the representatives of the overwhelming majority of the Portuguese workers and the majority of the Portuguese people, to break with the pact-program that codified their capitulation to the military junta, and establish a new

government without any bourgeois forces, by exercising their majority in the Constituent Assembly and appealing to the workers, peasants, and the rank and file of the armed forces to mobilize in support of it.

The Intersindical should remain independent of any government, including a workers and peasants government, since the unions must be the direct defenders of the economic interests of the workers.

The only national politically representative body chosen by the workers and masses in Portugal up to now is the Constituent Assembly, in which the workers parties hold an absolute majority. The fight for a workers and peasants government cannot be waged without defending popular sovereignty and all democratic gains, against efforts by the ruling class to restrict them. Concretely, this means defending the Constituent Assembly against attempts by the military junta and the leaderships of the SP and CP to undermine its authority and limit or destroy its sovereignty.

Making this demand on the two mass reformist parties of the working class, as a fundamental part of a united-front campaign of struggle, is an essential part of the process of advancing a working-class governmental alternative to the military re-

gime and exposing the incapacity of these parties to provide such an alternative.

Incipient organs of workers power can only arise out of united mass struggles of the working class along these lines. Workers councils or soviet forms cannot be imposed on the workers.

Advancing the independent organization of the working class is necessary so that the proletariat can meet the tasks of the class struggle in this period of crisis and win in a confrontation with the bourgeoisie. This involves pushing for broader and broader forms of workers organizations, industrial union structure, action committees, and democratic factory committees that can unify and mobilize the broad masses of the workers in the industrial zones and draw in other exploited layers. This process would culminate in regional and national congresses of workers organizations that can adopt general policies and lead the working masses in taking decisive initiatives.

The arming of the masses to defend their rights against attacks by reactionaries likewise cannot be accomplished separately from building united-front struggles along these lines. No minority, no matter how heroic, can substitute itself for the masses themselves in the decisive showdown.

This strategic line of march begins with the immediate and elementary needs of the working class, and leads toward the establishment of a workers and peasants government and the organization of soviets as the basis of a workers state.

The traitorous policies of the SP and CP and the confused lurchings of the centrists and Maoists have taken a severe toll. A Marxist course based on the independent organization and mobilization of the working masses assumes ever greater importance. The construction of a revolutionary party to provide correct leadership assumes ever greater urgency. Such a party does not yet exist in Portugal. It must be created in the heat of the struggle itself.

But even a small nucleus of revolutionists, armed with a correct program and strategy, can make swift gains. By fighting along the basic axes indicated, such a nucleus can play a decisive role in building the revolutionary party necessary to resolve the crisis of leadership in the Portuguese revolution.

Then the Portuguese working class will have the leadership it deserves. The misleaders will be swept aside, and the workers and their allies will storm to the victory of the Portuguese socialist revolution. □

The Debate on Portugal Between IS and Lutte Ouvrière

[In the Documents section of our January 12 issue we reprinted an article from the November 1975 issue of *Class Struggle*, bilingual publication of Lutte Ouvrière, a French organization that describes itself as Trotskyist.]

[The article reported on an international conference held in early November at which Lutte Ouvrière, the British International Socialists, and several other organizations discussed their differences on the Portuguese revolution.]

[We print below a statement the International Socialists issued to the press following the conference. The statement is undated but appears to have been issued before the November 25 coup attempt.]

* * *

At the beginning of November, Lutte Ouvrière organised an International Conference to discuss several issues, including the question of Portugal. The International Socialists (Great Britain) accepted the invitation to attend. As a result of this conference, we the IS wish to make the following statement:

The International Socialists believe that the Portuguese revolution, sparked off by the MFA coup of the 25th April 1974, is the most significant event in working class

history since the short lived victory of the Russian revolution over fifty years ago. It is not for nothing that the ruling classes of all countries are doing everything in their power to stifle the tremendous upsurge of independent activity of the workers and soldiers of Portugal.

Today, the Portuguese working class has the chance to overthrow the capitalist system of exploitation and oppression. They have purged the capitalist state of the fascists who dominated its every level for 48 years. They have organised themselves to defend the historic gains they have already achieved.

But the revolution cannot stand still. It can go forward to a successful overthrow of the bourgeois state, and the introduction of a workers' democracy leading to a socialist society. Or it can go back to a brutal and reactionary dictatorship and the rule of capital. There is no middle way. Portugal is too poor, and the working people too well organised, for there to exist the possibility of a "peaceful" introduction of Western European style "democracy."

We completely disagree with those, like Lutte Ouvrière, who pin their hopes on co-operation—on whatever level—with the Portuguese Socialist Party. It is Mario Soares who is attempting to organise gangs

of storm-troopers (the AMI [Agrupação Militar de Intervenção—Military Intervention Group]) to drown the revolution in blood. It is the PS, leadership and membership, who cheer the blowing up of the Radio Renascença transmitter—symbol of workers' control.

The task is not at all to fight alongside Soares in a "United Front" in order to defend the revolution from the extreme right wing and at the same time to "expose the leadership of the PS." The task is to unite all working class organisations in the workers' councils, to build organs of working class power that can do away with parasites like Soares, who, no less than Spinola, are waiting to strangle the working class movement which they unwittingly unleashed.

It is the elementary duty of all revolutionary socialists to support the Portuguese revolution. A victory in Portugal is a victory for workers throughout the world. No less certainly, a defeat would be a crushing blow to us all.

The International Socialists delegation proposed the following resolution at the Lutte Ouvrière conference:

"This conference recognises that the formation of the workers', soldiers' and tenants' committees, the arming of large sections of the working class, the occupa-

tion of the factories and the land, the complete breakdown of discipline in the armed forces, and the purging of the old fascist state apparatus, constitute a revolutionary situation in Portugal.

"The only two alternatives facing Portugal are a victory for workers' power on the one hand, or on the other, a Chilean-type catastrophe.

"We call upon all organisations represented here to give maximum active support to the revolutionary working class of Portugal."

The Growing Crisis of the Francoist Dictatorship

[The following statement was issued January 15 by the Central Committee of the Liga Comunista (Communist League), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

1. The events prior to the death of Franco (the mobilization against the death sentences,¹ the Sahara conflict) had already decisively worsened the crisis of the regime. The departure of the dictator, *the key unifying institution* of all the Francoist clans, will qualitatively deepen this mortal crisis and accelerate the development of tensions among the regime's "families" in a way that cannot be halted, completely upsetting their fragile equilibrium.

2. The government, which has still not presented its programmatic statement to the parliament, has clearly let its positions be known. The limits of this government are patently registered in the fraudulent "bicameral system" of [Interior Minister Manuel] Fraga; the ban on "terrorism, Communism, and separatism"; the "futuro sindical" (future of trade unionism), which is an open pronouncement of judgment against the workers commissions; and [Finance Minister Juan Miguel] Villar Mir's speech on the economy. They clearly show its character as the *antidemocratic continuator* of Francoism, which the bourgeois opposition is trying to disguise.

3. The new government of [President Carlos] Arias is the *weakest* in the entire history of Francoism. Without having managed to take a single step in the vaunted "institutionalization," and confronted with the greatest economic crisis of recent years, it faces the powerful upsurge of a mass movement that it has not been able to retreat in any serious way. The former government had to count on

Unfortunately, despite lengthy discussion, the conference would not support this resolution. The IS delegation therefore withdrew from the conference on the grounds that the position of LO and the other organisations represented made the conference a mockery.

But it is not yet too late. We repeat the call made in the resolution and we appeal to all working class organisations to live up to the tasks facing them.

Solidarity with the Portuguese workers' revolution! □

its periphery groups like Fedisa² to pretty up its image and plans. The tremendous weakness of the current government, which has up its sleeve even more brutal attacks against the workers and people, means it is forced to have persons like Ruiz Giménez and Tierno Galván³ play this dirty role. They disguise themselves as "socialists" and "prosocialists" to better deceive the proletariat and oppressed masses. These bourgeois sectors of the "democratic opposition," defenders of a truce with this government of continuation until they see what it does, are using the Junta and Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática⁴ to promote this policy with the PCE, PSOE,⁵ and other workers parties that form part of these bourgeois groupings.

The only possibility for the government really to take any serious step in its plans is this truce, which the workers parties may be able to force on the workers and oppressed masses.

The weakness of the government, which can be considered as the recently shaped *political expression of the changed relationship of forces* between classes to the advantage of the proletariat, creates better conditions for the struggle of the workers movement.

Right now the government finds it impossible, except at the cost of revealing itself openly, to stop the mass movement

from enforcing a limited *de facto* legality for its actions.

4. The government is totally incapable of stopping the advance of the mass movement toward the overthrow of the dictatorship. Any demagogic "reform" it carries out can only result in spurring the workers and oppressed forward and sharpening the disagreements among the Francoist clans. Nor can we reject the possibility—currently improbable—of steps backward under the pressure of ultraright sectors of the dictatorship. Because of their decisive role in the regime's institutions, which the big capitalists cannot do without, their influence in no way can be underrated. However, this solution has the disadvantage that if carried out without making the struggling masses retreat decisively, it could give rise to a greater response from the masses in the Spanish state and internationally.

5. In opposition to the "evolution" of the Fragas and the democratic "break" aimed at winning over sectors of the dictatorship by defending a program that maintains its essence, we Trotskyists reaffirm more forcefully than ever that the only way to overthrow monarcho-Francoism is with a general strike. Today conditions are better than ever for moving forward toward one. The recent struggles clearly show the possibility of the masses moving to direct action against the dictatorship.

We must go on the offensive against Francoism, breaking every truce. Toward the overthrow of the dictatorship through a general strike. For the total destruction of Francoism, which will permit free elections to a constituent assembly based on national constituent assemblies of the various oppressed peoples. For a provisional workers government capable of convening the constituent assembly and of meeting the most urgent needs and aspirations of the oppressed.

This is what is demanded of all workers parties. That is why we call for the creation of a class pact among all of them to promote such goals through the workers commissions. □

The Record of Capitalism

Fifteen thousand persons worldwide die of malnutrition each day, according to a report from the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization cited by Congressman Robert Drinan in the January 8 *Congressional Record*. Ten thousand of them are children.

At least 460 million persons are severely affected by malnutrition. More than 432 million of them—or 94 percent—live in the colonial or semicolonial world.

1. On September 27, 1975, five political prisoners were executed by Franco's firing squads.

2. Federación de Estudios Sociedad Anónima—Federation of Studies Incorporated.

3. Joaquín Ruiz Giménez is a leader of the Izquierda Demócrata Cristiana (Christian Democratic Left) and Enrique Tierno Galván, of the Partido Socialista Popular (People's Socialist party).

4. Democratic Junta, Platform of Democratic Convergence.

5. Partido Comunista de España (Spanish Communist party), Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers party).

For Solidarity With the Metalworkers of Madrid!

[The following statement was issued January 15 by the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista (Communist League), a sympathizing organization of the Fourth International in Spain. The translation is by *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Throughout the month of December, Madrid's metalworkers, bank workers, and construction workers headed the labor actions that swept the entire Spanish state, actions for local demands and against the recently issued wage-freeze decree.

Finance Minister Villar Mir reaffirmed the government's position. He cynically asserted that the cause of the economic crisis was the wages of the workers and that it was necessary to maintain the wage freeze at all costs.

The workers responded without delay. The impressive strike of Madrid's metalworkers, which was interrupted Saturday, January 10, took place in the midst of important shutdowns and assemblies among the metalworkers of Madrid (at Standard, Marconi, Boeticher, 15,000 in Getafe, and so on). These were accompanied by massive demonstrations at various companies, along with the work stoppage of 5,000 workers in banking in support of the committee—responsible to the assemblies and outside the CNS¹—that is negotiating their demands. These are the most advanced indications of this working-class response.

It is of key importance for all workers of the Spanish state. The advance in winning labor's economic demands depends in large part on its success. Solidarity with the struggle of Madrid's metal and bank workers should be the focus of the workers' struggle.

Against the Wage-Freeze Decree

The government has grasped the importance of beating back these strikes to maintain its anti-working-class economic policy. The Council of Ministers' meeting of January 9 was dominated by this battle against the workers' interests. As he left, the minister of information told us that they would distinguish between "problems raised in a legal manner and the defense of public order."

That is, all struggles against the wage-freeze decree that are organized in mass assemblies outside the "legality of the CNS" are matters of public order. The government would intervene on the side of

the businessmen. Thus, the government's policy is shown by the intervention of the army as strikebreakers, the partial militarization of the subway employees in Madrid, the constant attacks against demonstrations and assemblies, along with the fact that the CNS has taken a hard line against assemblies and workers' strikes.

The government intervention against Madrid's metal and bank workers—the vanguard in the struggle for workers' economic demands—is a challenge to workers throughout the Spanish state. The government has concentrated its forces against the strikers. The workers must unite their ranks against the government. Only this will assure that the strikes succeed.

In view of the fact that trade-union rights have been trampled on, the entire working class must demand:

The right to strike, demonstrate, and hold meetings.

A workers union. Down with the CNS!

Interventions of the police against the rights and struggle of the working class must be stopped.

Get the police out of the factories and working-class neighborhoods.

Disband the special repressive bodies.

The army's intervention in strikes must be stopped.

No to the drafting of the subway workers.

No to the army acting as strikebreakers.

Honest representatives of the CNS can do nothing if they do not break with CNS legality, which impedes the organization of a united struggle in solidarity with the metalworkers. They should go over to organizing with their compañeros in the assemblies and resign from their posts in the CNS.

We condemn the Junta and Convergencia

Democráticas.² They present themselves as groups struggling for democracy, but when the masses go out to fight for their economic demands and trade-union rights, they don't take a single step in their defense. They are silent, showing once again the true interests of their leaders—the bankers and businessmen.

On your fight alone depends the victory of the struggle for economic demands, for trade-union rights.

We must build the broadest possible unity around the factory, work center, and school assemblies to carry out fighting measures.

We must centralize our actions in the street.

We must move toward a general day of struggle throughout the state.

Everyone fight in solidarity with Madrid!

2. Democratic Junta and Democratic Convergence, both popular-frontist organizations.

Dominican Labor Leaders Freed

The U.S. Committee for Justice to Latin American Political Prisoners (USLA) has announced that two leaders of the Dominican Central General de Trabajadores (CGT—General Workers Federation) were released from prison December 22, 1975. The two are Francisco Antonio Santos, CGT general secretary, and Eugenio Pérez Cepeda, CGT secretary of grievances.

The union leaders had been held without charges since last June. They were arrested in a witch-hunt the Balaguer dictatorship carried out in search of "guerrillas" involved in an alleged "invasion" from Cuba.

At the request of the CGT, USLA has been coordinating activities in the United States in defense of the jailed unionists.

MEMO

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1. Central Nacional Sindicalista (National Federation of Syndicates), the official Falangist trade union.

For a Workers United Front to Finish With Francoism

[The following statement was issued December 14, 1975, by the Political Bureau of the Liga Comunista (LC—Communist League), a sympathizing organization of

the Fourth International in Spain. The translation and footnotes are by *Intercontinental Press*.]

1. Racked by Crisis, the Dictatorship Is Still Standing

The Death of the Dictator

Franco's departure stretches the dictatorship's crisis to the limit. The struggle of the Basque and European masses against the execution of the ETA and FRAP activists¹ and the resurgence of the Sahara conflict² had already deepened the regime's crisis in the final days of September. Franco's death raised it to gigantic proportions.

The world economic crisis continues to buffet the Spanish state. In the face of this the capitalists are putting their "solution" into practice—increase unemployment (to one million by the end of the year), freeze wages, raise prices.

Despite massive participation by the workers in the last CNS elections³ (except in some zones of Euzkadi), the CNS is in an uncontrollable crisis. Its margin of maneuver is restricted to the maximum by the economic situation and the combativity of the workers. The refurbished repressive decrees on strikes, trade-union meetings, and labor relations have not diminished the eruptions and splitting away of the working masses, but have instead only increased them. The delegates of the official unions are beginning to be challenged, and massive outbursts are in the works.

The growing revolt of the oppressed nationalities cannot be slowed down. On the contrary, decrees like the one on "Local Rule" and other traps only act as stimuli.

Laws and decrees against the youth⁴

1. On September 27, 1975, two members of Euzkadi ta Azkatasuna (Basque Nation and Freedom) and three members of the Frente Revolucionario Antifascista y Patriota (Revolutionary Antifascist and Patriotic Front) were executed by Franco's firing squads.

2. The struggle of the Saharan masses for self-determination was challenged by Morocco's and Mauritania's territorial claims to the area, from which Franco had agreed to withdraw.

3. The June 1975 elections to the Central Nacional Sindicalista (National Federation of Syndicates), the Franco regime's substitute for a trade union.

4. The General Education Law, a long-range plan to deny access to higher education to broad sectors of youth, has been accompanied by other partial steps: a "selectivity" decree designed to limit university admissions; a screening procedure for all fourteen- and fifteen-year-old students, which channels them into "academic" or "gener-

al" programs of study; and a fake election "participation" scheme for school delegates.

5. The Francoist scheme to "legalize" political organizations that are approved by the dictatorship.

6. The August 27, 1975, law ordering a mandatory

have not succeeded in removing them from the front lines of the fight against the dictatorship. The failure of the "Political Associations"⁵ is the highest expression of the regime's institutional bankruptcy. They have not organized the participation of the various Francoist clans nor have they won new adherents of Francoism among the most backward sectors of the middle classes. The fundamental pillars of the regime have not escaped the crisis. Relations between the church and the dictatorship continue to deteriorate. The bulk of the church hierarchy is determined to keep its distance and maintain its privileges under strong pressure from the Catholic masses. The army is torn by open cleavages because of the ongoing political crisis. They are made more acute by the Sahara conflict and the repressive role the army is supposed to play against an ascending mass movement. In this situation, repression continues to be the essential prop of the regime's institutions and plans. The step-up of executions, which the Antiterrorist Law⁶ was designed to inaugurate, has been thwarted by mass action, although important attacks of this type continue under cover of the law. As a result, the bourgeois press itself has had to take its distance from the regime, increasingly coming under the fire of the government's updated repressive arsenal.

Thus, the charismatic chief of the civil war has left behind a regime in deep political crisis, caught between a difficult economic situation and growing resistance of the masses. And he carries his charisma—the basic institution of Francoism—with him to the grave.

Big Business Takes a Stand

Big business in Spain and internationally and the bureaucracies of the East and West have already taken sides. They favor continuity of the dictatorship through the rule of Juan Carlos I. They seek the best

way to guarantee their privileges in face of the threat of the masses. That is why they currently reject the offers from the traditional leaderships of the workers movement to maintain what is fundamental in the dictatorship behind a façade of restricted democratic rights in an effort to control the torrential proletarian mobilization. In their view, the nearby example of Portugal confirms that the move to a regime of such restricted rights could have deadly consequences, stimulating large-scale action by the masses against which the "good intentions" of such leaderships might be ineffective. And they also reject at present the proposals to maintain continuity in its most strident forms, put forward by the most recalcitrant sectors of the dictatorship's political and military apparatus. Even the most conservative section of the major capitalists is not currently eager to go along with the solutions those sectors propose. Big business rightfully believes that such solutions today would evoke a radical reaction on the part of a rising workers and people's movement. However, such solutions are not necessarily ruled out for the future.

For all these reasons, big business today is standing by the dictatorship, willing to fortify it until its last cartridge is spent.

Juan Carlos I, the New Dictator

The major capitalist interests want to continue the dictatorship under cover of the Borbón king—heir, accomplice, and continuator of each and every one of Franco's aggressions.

Juan Carlos I showed this the very day of his coronation. He swore "to carry out and enforce carrying out of the fundamental laws of the kingdom and to safeguard the principles that shape the national movement." In his speech he made clear his determination to continue the dictatorship and all its attacks.

Deeds speak louder than words. In his still short period of rule, Juan Carlos I has handed down laws and decrees that bare his real intention:

- The decree freezing wages and raising prices with its demagogic, ineffective measures against shutdowns, which mean significant attacks on the workers.

- The tripartite agreement on the Sahara with Morocco and Mauritania, which tramples the Saharan people's right to independence and leaves the door open for armed

death penalty for anyone convicted of killing a government official. It defined as "terrorist" the activities of the country's clandestine political parties, which include virtually all opposition groups, and established new restrictions on individual civil liberties and the press.

conflict and genocide against the Saharan masses by invaders.

- The decree on language, which, in addition to denying the oppressed nationalities the right to make decisions on their own problems, institutionalizes the existing inequality among the various languages. The reestablishment of the "economic agreement"⁷ between Vizcaya and Guipúzcoa is a joke of the Spanish king on the people of Euzkadi.

- The Law of Local Rule, which is a refusal to allow the population as a whole to elect and organize local administration freely.

- The recent pardon, which denies amnesty and reconfirms the Antiterrorist Law with all its consequent ongoing arrests.

But big business is conscious of the weakness of Francoism without Franco. For that reason it steps up its maneuvers to strengthen the king. The big capitalists demagogically glorify him as the messiah of democracy so as to deceive the aspiring oppressed masses of the Spanish state and

7. An agreement between Madrid and the provincial Basque governments providing for "autonomy" through the sharing of tax revenues.

2. A Workers United Front or a Pact With the Bourgeoisie?

At a time of acute crisis for the dictatorship, the proletariat and the people have the decisive say. In opposition to the big capitalists and bureaucrats who are closing ranks behind the worm-eaten throne of Juan Carlos I, the working class must also unite its ranks and ally itself with those who have shown themselves to be friends in the course of struggles against the dictatorship. It must build a *workers united front* in alliance with the rest of the workers, the youth, the peasantry, and the oppressed nationalities, with the support of the international workers movement. The aim is to impose its own solution to the regime's crisis by means of a *general strike to bring down the dictatorship and install a workers government*, which will end repression and oppression, and lay the basis for an end to exploitation.

The *united front* we propose, far from isolating the proletariat or depriving it of alliances, would unite and strengthen the working class, making it possible for it to win the support and confidence of all oppressed sectors of the population.

The urgency of the task stems from the inescapable need to strengthen and extend mass resistance in opposition to the succession of Juan Carlos, the repression, and other attacks by the dictatorship. It is necessary to mount a general counteroffensive of the proletariat and oppressed, heading toward a general strike that will

the rest of the world. And at the same time they prepare to carry out a range of political operations designed to polish and prop up Juan Carlism—the most important attempt at present being the recently formed government and its upcoming declaration of "principles." It is no more than a great coalition government of the remaining bits and pieces of the main Francoist clans. As some of the bourgeoisie itself explains in its press, "It could be approved by Franco himself." Its scheduled communiqué-program is an attempt to revive the "ghost of February 12,"⁸ incorporating the new "Fragaist"⁹ phraseology. It will not be long in revealing its purely demagogic character. It will register once again the decision to continue the hated dictatorship, that is, to continue the repression, oppression, and exploitation of the people, behind which the bulk of big capital and the bureaucracy of the workers states are closing ranks.

8. Premier Carlos Arias Navarro's 1974 speech to the Spanish parliament promising to liberalize the country's political life.

9. Manuel Fraga, new minister of the interior, one of the prominent "reformers" of the Juan Carlos regime.

finish with Francoism once and for all.

Today, this task is not only necessary but also perfectly feasible. The possibilities—already demonstrated in past mobilizations against Franco's executions—are today highlighted by the wave of struggles extending across the country:

The metalworkers' mobilizations in Madrid in solidarity with their slain compañeros from Barreiros and for their own demands; the construction workers' strike in Madrid December 3; the solidarity struggles around the Laforsa strike in Baix Llobregat (Barcelona); several strikes in Guipúzcoa; the eruption of tensions and assemblies in a great number of companies throughout the state; the growing mobilizations of university youth in the major regions (especially Madrid and Barcelona); the mobilization of some sectors of untenured professors and the growing agitation among teachers.

This crystallized December 9-12 in important mobilizations in Madrid and, to a lesser extent, in the Barcelona area, as well as in other places throughout the state—Seville, Gijón, and so on.

The ongoing struggle of metalworkers in Madrid only increases the possibilities of larger explosions. It cannot help but stimulate broad sectors of the proletariat to act, accelerating the reorganization that is already under way.

The need for and enormous possibilities of forming a workers united front increase

the responsibilities of the organized workers movement:

- The responsibility to help the proletariat and oppressed masses build their united front by encouraging independent mass action and the forms of democratic, united mass organization—the central strike committees.

- The responsibilities above all of the *workers commissions* and united bodies of other layers, of the PCE, PSOE, and other working-class forces (PTE, MCE, ORT).¹⁰

- The responsibility concretized in the forging of a *pact of proletarian unity* that will make a workers united front possible.

Friends and Enemies

The establishment of such a *class pact* requires stepping outside the current confusion to distinguish between friends and enemies. To do so it is necessary to see who is fighting effectively against the dictatorship, at the side of and for common objectives with the working class. It is necessary to pinpoint the enemy among those who disguise themselves as friends.

This is the case of various bourgeois personalities and groups who today present themselves as champions of democracy and defenders of the people's interests. Some must bury their black pasts, since they have been ministers in the Franco regime (like Ruiz Giménez), responsible for the death of thousands of workers (like former minister of the CEDA¹¹ Gil Robles), or have sold out their people's freedoms (like the Partido Nacionalista Vasco¹²). They call themselves the "Democratic Opposition" and in general take refuge behind the symbols of the "Junta Democrática" and "Convergencia Democrática."¹³ In the recent joint communiqués of the two organizations we see what their aims are.

They deny the need to destroy the entire Francoist apparatus and repressive legislation. They seek amnesty for both sides, with pardons for the Francoist criminals.

They cut down the demand for the democratic rights that Francoism is trampling on and the people anxiously hoping for. They oppose the right of the oppressed nationalities to decide their future freely.

They ignore the most essential needs of

10. Partido Comunista de España (Spanish Communist party), Partido Socialista Obrero Español (Spanish Socialist Workers party), Partido del Trabajo de España (Spanish Labor party), Movimiento Comunista Español (Spanish Communist Movement), Organización Revolucionaria de los Trabajadores (Revolutionary Workers Organization).

11. Confederación Española de Derechos Autónomos (Spanish Confederation of Autonomous Rights), a Catholic fascist party.

12. Basque Nationalist party.

the proletariat and oppressed sectors of the cities and countryside.

They favor enforcing a "constituent process" under their leadership and under the tutelage of the civil-war army. They propose the formation of a broad coalition provisional government made up of bourgeois personalities and groups, with the participation of the traditional leaderships of the workers movement, to press through the swindle they want to force on the workers and people.

Their deeds are even more eloquent. While the proletariat and people were fighting against the dictatorship, these persons and groups devoted themselves to making speeches about "reconciliation" and "violence," condemning the direct action of the workers, and actually justifying Franco's repression of the oppressed masses, as in the case of the executions of mistaken activists like "Txiki."¹⁴ These bourgeois forces have in fact always displayed a tremendous panic at mass action. They have shown that their differences with the dictatorship rest on what methods to use to stop such action.

These false friends of the working class thus pave the way today for the "democratic" trump card of the big capitalists, who will find themselves obliged to use it to contain the revolutionary torrent that will be released with the fall of Francoism.

A Class Pact Against the Dictatorship

The bourgeois "Democratic Opposition" can do nothing on its own since the Ruiz Giménez and Calvo Serer¹⁵ have no credibility among the proletariat and other oppressed layers. Their influence is due to the collaboration lent them by some workers parties, like the PCE, PSOE, and other opportunists. Without these workers parties, which serve as transmission belts for their plans into the workers and people's movement, these bourgeois forces would not deceive anyone or be able to do anything.

They would be able to do nothing without the invaluable aid of the orientation pushed by the Communist party leadership, assisted by others—that is, the CP's popular-front policy and its concretization in a "Pact for Freedom" between workers and bosses, generals, the church hierarchy, former Franco ministers, and so on, to achieve what they call "national reconciliation."

13. Democratic Junta and Democratic Convergence.

14. Alias of Juan Paredes, one of the ETA members executed September 27.

15. Joaquín Ruiz Giménez and Rafael Calvo Serer, prominent figures in the Convergencia and Junta, respectively.

It is in pursuit of this that they devote themselves to channeling all labor and popular activism toward the preparation of a "National Democratic Action," as the form of action designed to achieve a "break" with the dictatorship. "National Democratic Action" really means giving up the only methods of action capable of overthrowing Francoism—the methods of Euzkadi and of the general strike.

As a result of this orientation, battles that have recently taken place have been blocked time and again. In the fight against the five executions, the people of Euzkadi for all practical purposes remained isolated in their struggle because of the absence of mobilizations in the rest of the state. The amnesty actions were cut off from actions that arose in factory and study centers in an attempt to reduce them to peaceful congregations in front of the jails and to letters and statements from delegates of official trade unions, UTTs,¹⁶ neighborhood associations, and so on. In the mobilizations going on now, especially in Madrid, this can be seen once again in the refusal of these leaders to centralize the struggles of the metalworkers, construction workers, and university students.

In the name of big business, the "Democratic Opposition" calls for collaboration from the traditional workers parties, with an eye toward carrying out the capitalists'

16. Uniones de Trabajadores y Técnicos (Technicians and Workers Unions).

3. Everyone Must Fight!

For Aims That Can Unify the Working Class and Place It at the Head of All Oppressed

1. In face of the antidemocratic maneuver of the Juan Carlist succession, the essence of which is that everything will stay the same for the workers and people, and in face of the false alternatives proposed by the "Junta" and the "Convergencia," *the people must have their say.*

To achieve that, we call for a struggle for a *constituent assembly* to be chosen through direct, free, universal suffrage for all persons over sixteen years of age, in elections conducted on the basis of full political and trade-union rights. For the total destruction of the Francoist repressive apparatus. For the convening of *constituent assemblies* among the various nationalities of the state.

All fighters must unite to prepare and press this struggle. Our party will do this and will oppose any attempt, even if carried out with monarchist or republican refinements, to take the say out of the hands of the proletariat and the people.

2. In face of the denial of any amnesty that would mean pardons, in face of the

plans. In the name of the interests of the working class, we propose that those workers parties take a different path:

- That they defend a *class pact* for the total ouster of the dictatorship through a *general strike*, opening the way for a provisional government based on the organizations leading the overturn. That they give a concrete form to such a *class pact among each oppressed nationality.*

- That the *General Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions of Spain* organize and encourage the independent mobilization of the workers and oppressed behind such a class pact. That the *National Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions of Catalonia*, and the *Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions* along with the *National Workers Commission of Euzkadi* do the same among their respective nationalities. The same for the coordinating committees of other nationalities, regions, and places.

- That concretely today they organize and promote mass resistance in opposition to all the dictatorship's attacks in each branch of production and sector of the population, moving toward general actions by different branches and sectors in each region and nationality, building toward a *general day of action* throughout the Spanish state that will thwart the plans of the dictatorship and be a decisive step toward the general strike that will overthrow it.

unending repression, we call for building the broadest possible front to fight the repression.

- *Amnesty. Immediate release of all political prisoners. Free return for exiles.* Amnesty must be extended to all spheres: for the nullification of all labor and academic sanctions and proceedings, for immediate reinstatement of all who have been dismissed.

- Amnesty cannot be for both sides. *For the determination of responsibility for all Francoist crimes* by tribunals freely elected by the population.

- *Down with the Antiterrorist Decree Law and all repressive Francoist legislation!*

- *Dissolve all repressive special bodies and tribunals, both civilian and military.*

This struggle cannot slacken. Repression continues to be the ultimate recourse of the regime.

3. All of this increases the possibilities for redoubling the fight for economic and social demands.

We call for the building of a joint mobilization against the attack on wages,

and against shutdowns and horrible working and living conditions. For building an action front against the General Education Law, led by the working class. For encouraging the broadest possible revolt of the peasant masses.

All the fake democrats who are crowded together in the "Junta" and "Convergencia" oppose this necessary step, which would endanger their capitalist profits.

We Trotskyists maintain that the struggle to consolidate such vital gains of the working class and other oppressed layers of the city and countryside will require deepgoing transformations (nationalizations, expropriations). In any case, this struggle today is closely linked to the fight against repression and for full political and trade-union freedom, in particular *against the wage-freeze decree* and for the free negotiation of collective-bargaining agreements through a union of the workers.

4. For all these reasons, we call for a fight for full democratic rights against any form of oppression. We call for a fight for *freedom of expression, assembly, and association* in opposition to all the maneuvers of the new dictator in this field. In face of the bureaucratic machine and antilabor laws, we say, *Down with the CNS!*, the "labor relations" laws, antistrike decrees, collective-bargaining agreements, and wage-freeze decrees. *For a united trade-union federation of the workers, based on workers democracy and independent of the capitalists, their state, and the church! A federation that will make possible the free negotiation of collective-bargaining agreements without state intervention. For the unrestricted right to strike.*

- The upcoming delegate elections would reinforce and extend bureaucratic control among university youth and high-school students by putting into practice the student "participation" decree. *For the right of the students to organize freely! For democratic administration of the university and institutes by the students, professors, and nonteaching personnel! For university autonomy!*

- The upcoming municipal elections would deny the people the right to organize local administration freely. To this end, the government has put forward the "Local Rule Law." *For free, direct elections through universal suffrage of all persons over sixteen years of age for all posts in the local administrations.*

- In face of Francoist "participation" in the antidemocratic Cortes,¹⁷ the proletariat and people must fight for a *constituent assembly elected through universal suffrage under totally free conditions.*

- Against the dictatorship and its united oppression of all peoples, against the

"statutes" prepared behind the backs of the oppressed nationalities, which are proposed by the "democratic opposition." For the *right to self determination for Euzkadi* (including Navarra), *Catalonia, Galicia, Valencia, the Balears and Canary Islands.* As the best way to exercise it, we propose the election of *national constituent assemblies*, which would decide the relations of the nationality to the central state in addition to being able to tackle many aspects of the organization of the nationality's life, including language, culture, education, and administration.

- *For the complete separation of church and state.*

- In opposition to the civil-war army and to the "democratic opposition," which by defending this army does not defend the rights of the troops, we call for six months military service without billeting, to be carried out in the place of residence. For effective military education for both sexes. *For full citizens' rights for soldiers. For democratic control of the army by the troops*, through committees elected by assemblies.

Toward a General Strike

We call for the launching of a generalized struggle against each and every attack by the Francoist regime. This struggle must take the path of direct action followed in past mobilizations in Euzkadi, which the "Democratic National Actions" are trying to bury.

That involves:

- Encouraging and extending *mass assemblies* in work and study centers, assemblies of youth in neighborhoods and towns, assemblies of peasants. Such assemblies should be the only center of decision-making and organization where aims and methods of struggle are decided. For the *election in assemblies of committees, subject to recall*, to organize and lead the struggle according to the decisions reached.

- *From the centers to the streets to demonstrate at other factories. Toward joint assemblies* of workers from the same zone. Move forward in electing committees subject to recall, and toward increasing their coordination. Other layers of the population that are struggling must do the same.

- For the coordination of the committees elected at factories and by zones with the workers commissions based in plants where there are no such committees, so as to form a *central strike committee* capable of encompassing the representatives from committees elected among other layers and from their united bodies. This is the only authentic center of organization and leadership of generalized local and regional action by each nationality throughout the entire state. It is the only center capable of promoting independent organization of

mass struggles until the general strike that brings down the dictatorship, and of laying the basis for forming a "Provisional Executive Power" that would respond to the workers' interests across the Spanish state and among each nationality.

- From the assemblies in the work and study centers, from the joint zone assemblies, *toward the most important population center in each region.* As elected committees and united bodies advance in forming central strike committees, they must take on the task of calling central actions and general days of action to unify the struggle under way and incorporate new sectors in it.

- Likewise, they must organize the *defense of the actions through pickets*, formed by industry or sector, based in the work and study centers, which will become increasingly coordinated with each other. This means that starting now the workers commissions and similar bodies in other layers must work for the organization of a stable force that can serve as the backbone of these pickets.

- Each step in this direction will create favorable conditions for negotiating demands. That requires drawing up a *platform of demands for the entire industry*, to which the specifics are added in each plant. For the election of *mandated commissions* by factory assemblies, from the outset of the mobilization, to transmit to the bosses what was agreed there. For the coordination of such commissions on an industrywide basis in a single *representative commission* to negotiate directly with the bosses. This is the only representative negotiating center for the workers, not the UTTs, nor the assemblies of the CNS delegates.

- This path of unified struggle demands breaking with the divisive mechanisms of the dictatorship—not "using" the CNS and the Francoist channels of student "participation." The delegates of the official Falangist trade unions, the honest delegates, showed that those channels did not work during the fight to free Garmendia¹⁸ and the other *compañeros*. They are showing how they do not work to fight against the succession of Juan Carlos or to organize the struggle today for basic demands.

Down with the CNS! For the transformation of Francoist collective-bargaining policy into a scrap of paper. Down with student and professor "participation." For the resignation of the honest delegates of the official unions and the other honest delegates. Let them organize the struggle in assemblies with their *compañeros* from the workers commissions, other united bodies, and from the elected committees.

17. The Francoist parliament.

18. José Antonio Garmendia, an ETA member convicted on charges stemming from the death of a member of the Civil Guard.

• Struggles with a similar dynamic must be mounted in each and every oppressed layer of the population.

• In face of all these needs, the opportunist leaders of the workers movement foster the illusion that bourgeois personalities and even sectors of the regime's institutions can—if they are asked in a “public-spirited” way—satisfy the needs of the workers and people. *Enough of subordinating the action of the masses to pressuring these individuals and institutions!*

Petty-bourgeois terrorists, opting for executions and bombs, reject the need to build the independent mobilization of the workers. They torpedo it. *Down with the reactions of impotence that complement the legalistic work of the reformists!*

Unity of the Organized Workers and People's Movement

It is essential to overcome division and the current disorganization, unifying all efforts of the organized workers and people's movement.

• We call for unity in the workers commissions and in the united bodies of other layers, of all workers parties, organizations, and fighters to confront the attacks of the capitalists and their dictatorship. Within this united framework it will be possible to organize and encourage the workers to act to win their needs, to initiate the elected committees, to centralize them step by step in central strike committees, to make the workers commissions the backbone of the drive toward a trade-union constituent congress, which—on the ashes of the CNS— will resolve what kind of trade union the workers need.

• For promoting and defending the workers commissions, for building and rebuilding them, for unifying them in each center at all levels. For coordinating them by industry and area. On this basis the General Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions will be truly representative. The influence their leaders have in the workers movement should be used for this job instead of being shut off in bureaucratic coordinating committees, with the role of the workers commissions delegated to the official trade unions and UTTs.

• For promoting and defending the united committees of youth in institutes, professional schools, universities, and neighborhoods. Forward to their coordination on a local and nationwide scale, and by nationalities. *For encouraging united bodies of other oppressed layers.*

The Necessity to Break With the Bourgeoisie

“Liberal” managers, “progressive” bishops, “professional” generals, “liberalizing” bureaucrats, and “democratic” politicians

are increasing their maneuvers and demagoguery, alarmed by the masses' advance toward the general strike. Today they obstruct this advance when they can and prepare a “coalition government” that will allow them to keep their privileges when the dictatorship falls to pieces.

The “Democratic Junta” and “Convergencia,” where the majority of these personages take shelter, compete to attract the support of the big capitalists. With the support of the traditional workers parties to one or the other organization, they hope to divide the workers movement and subordinate it to the “democratic” plans of the big capitalists. Neither the “Junta” nor the “Convergencia” nor any of these bourgeois personages who disguise themselves as democrats would have influence in the workers movement if the workers parties with the greatest weight were not backing their plans.

• We call on the PCE, PSOE and all parties supported by the working class to break with the Junta Democrática de España, the Convergencia Democrática, the Basque government, and the Asamblea de Catalunya¹⁹ in order to build a workers united front against the dictatorship.

• We call on the General Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions of Spain, the National Workers Commission of Catalonia, the CECO and CONE²⁰ to break with the Junta, the Convergencia, and other pacts with the bourgeoisie. We call on them to organize the struggle of the proletariat and oppressed layers for their demands, using the methods of direct action and independent mass organization.

Toward the General Strike Down With the Dictatorship! For a Workers Government

Demagogues in the pay of big capital today speak out to propose “constitutional reform” and a “big coalition government” that will make possible Juancarlist continuity. Other bourgeois figures propose a “democratic break” and a “coalition government” with workers parties to save the

19. Catalan Assembly.

20. Coordinadora de Euzkadi de Comisiones Obreras (Euzkadi Coordinating Committee of Workers Commissions), Comisión Obrera Nacional de Euzkadi (Basque National Workers Commission).

fundamental features of the repressive Francoist apparatus and part of a somewhat prettied-up bureaucratic machinery—with the aim of maintaining oppression and exploitation. Everyone wants to strangle the heartfelt cry arising from the people—Destroy Francoism to its very roots!

Only a *provisional workers government* without a single bourgeois minister, based on the organizations that lead the overthrow of the dictatorship—the central strike committees made up of the elected committees, the workers commissions, and united bodies of other layers—can assure satisfaction of such aspirations. Such a government should receive support from *provisional workers governments among each of the oppressed nationalities.*

Such a government would also be an economical government, devoid of the burden of swindling bureaucrats, parasitic generals, scandalous ministerial expense accounts, and the expenditures of capricious monarchs.

Such a *workers government* would have to take the following steps:

1. Totally destroy the repressive Francoist apparatus. Name and purge those responsible for Francoist crimes. Arm the general population and establish democratic control over the army.

2. Assure the full exercise of all political and trade-union rights, the calling of free elections to the general constituent assembly in Spain and among each oppressed nationality.

3. Meet the most pressing needs of the proletariat and oppressed masses: (a) Institute the sliding scale of wages and hours. (b) Divide up the land among those who work it, expropriate the big landowners without compensation, and abolish mortgages and debts. (c) Introduce free, secular education, obligatory until eighteen years of age. Nationalize education and expropriate the big private education businesses without compensation. (d) Expropriate the big monopolies without compensation; nationalize banking and create a single central state bank.

All these steps, in addition to meeting the most urgent needs and aspirations of the oppressed, presuppose a death blow to the reactionaries and lay the groundwork for economic planning to serve the workers. They are measures that the constituent assembly should endorse and deepen.

4. For a Fundamental Solution

We Trotskyists assert that the ripening crisis is a social crisis of the world capitalist system and that the crisis of Francoism is one of its most explosive expressions. And we state that such a crisis cannot be solved short of the installation of a *socialist republic* as a transition toward the Socialist

United States of Europe.

We are fighting against Francoism in the ways we have presented with all the revolutionary courage we possess. But we cannot hide the fact that there is no stable solution to a single important problem except within the framework of the *socialist*

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republic—the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.

If all the parties and organizations that claim to represent the working class were willing to fight for the overthrow of Francoism and the installation of a socialist republic, the venture could be carried out with minimal costs in suffering and effort.

But not a single one of the leaderships that currently have the greatest weight and responsibilities in the workers and people's movement is really fighting to enforce such a solution. They show it in their program and their deeds. Thus we cannot give them any credit until they demonstrate the contrary.

Despite that, there is an urgent need for unity in the struggle against capitalism and its dictatorship. Thus we call on these parties and organizations to assume their responsibilities. We are willing to carry out any agreement, support any concrete steps—no matter how limited it may be—to aid the progress of the struggle against oppression and exploitation. At the same time we call on the activists of the PCE and other workers parties, whose integrity we do not doubt, to demand that their leaders live up to these responsibilities, that they add their efforts to those of the fighters as a whole and not place anything in the way of what is needed to encourage mass action.

Over and above political or ideological differences, we want to stress the importance of joint work within the framework of a united front, which is what the workers commissions have been from their birth. Any differences that might arise in such a framework should find expression in the form of tendencies, whose functioning should be based entirely on workers democracy. That is, agreements are to be reached on the basis of majority vote, with minorities having the right and duty to express themselves. There are no differences that would serve as sufficient excuse to break this united framework!

Long experience shows that if the working class does not adopt a program of independent struggle in opposition to all factions of the bourgeoisie, if it adopts programs that seek to subordinate the proletarian struggle to the interests of the capitalists, the workers united front will not be built and unity among the fighters themselves will be extremely difficult to achieve. The current situation is a sad demonstration of that. It must be overcome!

To do so it is essential that all fighters who see the need to press the independent struggle of the proletariat and other oppressed toward a general strike to overthrow Francoism and install a workers government, and who see the need to do this within the framework of a united vanguard, organize themselves as a struggle tendency for a class united front. We Trotskyists are committed to do our best in the fight to create such a tendency. This

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tendency will act within the unified framework of the workers commissions and unified bodies of other layers, countering other tendencies that favor a pact with the bourgeoisie.

* * *

The struggle against Francoism is an integral part of the struggle of the proletariat and oppressed of the world against exploitation and capitalist and bureaucratic oppression. But at the same time, it is one of the most bitter expressions of that struggle. As such, it deserves the attention of the international working class, especially the proletariat of the Old World.

• We call on the workers states, and the workers parties and trade unions throughout the world, to promote the broadest possible solidarity with our struggle, continuing the course of mass solidarity launched worldwide in December 1970 and in last September's mobilizations.²¹

The proletariat and peoples of the Spanish state also have an obligation to internationalism. They must step up the struggle against the Francoist international pacts and aggressions:

• Immediate, unconditional independence for Sahara. Immediate return of Ceuta and Melilla²² to Morocco. Immediate

and unconditional withdrawal of Spanish troops from North Africa.

Out with the Yankee imperialists' military bases on the territory of the Spanish state. Break the military pacts with the United States, France, and Portugal. Against entering NATO.

• Immediate, unconditional return of Gibraltar to the Spanish state.

• Solidarity with the Portuguese working class and people. Get rid of the PIDEs, ELP/MDLP,²³ the Portuguese reactionaries who have taken asylum in the Spanish state. Call a halt to the traffic in arms and currency!

• Solidarity with the struggles of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the world.

This entire effort that we propose is a fundamental aspect of the struggle to build the *Fourth International in the Spanish state*, the genuine communist combat party needed by the proletarian masses.

That is why, on the eve of great class battles, we issue a call to the most conscious workers, to all consistent revolutionists, to first and foremost build such a party with us as part of the effort to build the *Fourth International, the party of the international proletarian revolution*. □

enclaves.

23. Polícia Internacional e de Defesa do Estado (International Security Police under the Portuguese dictatorship), Exército de Libertação Portuguesa/Movimento Democrático de Libertação Portuguesa (Portuguese Liberation Army/Democratic Movement for the Liberation of Portugal), the rightist underground led by Spínola.

21. December 1970 was the date of mass demonstrations protesting the death sentences for political prisoners tried in Burgos. September 1975 was the date of similar protests for ETA and FRAP activists sentenced to death.

22. Two Moroccan cities that are Spanish colonial

NAACP Issues Report on Black Unemployment

'Reverses' Comparable to the Great Depression

Despite gains made in struggle over the past twenty-five years, Black workers in the United States are experiencing reverses "in every category of measurement—unemployment rate, duration of joblessness, in earnings and in labor force entry of young workers. . . ."

In short, "the black community is being forced back into patterns that were commonplace during the Great Depression of the 1930's."

This is the conclusion of the section on employment in the annual report of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), issued in mid-January.

These conditions, the report said, while due in part to the general economic slump, are "also a direct consequence of the failure of the Federal Government to enforce the

extensive prohibitions against job discrimination."

Official figures mask the grim reality of unemployment in the Black community. According to the government, the unemployment rate is 7.6 percent for whites and 14.1 percent for Blacks.

The report points out, however, that if "hidden unemployment" and "discouraged workers"—that is, part-time workers and workers no longer in the labor force—are taken into account, a more accurate figure for unemployment would be 13.6 percent for whites and 25.5 percent for Blacks.

In addition, the report said, information from twenty-five urban areas with large Black populations shows Black unemployment to be 30 percent, and Black teen-age unemployment to be above 40 percent. □

Acuerdo Libanés Mantiene Cuotas Religiosas

Por David Russell

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "Lebanese Accord Maintains Religious Quotas" que aparece en este número de *Intercontinental Press*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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Se llegó a un nuevo cese de hostilidades en Líbano el 22 de enero. Sin embargo, la tregua entre las fracciones rivales se basa en el intento de ponerle parches al sistema anticuado y discriminatorio de cuotas religiosas que condujo a la guerra civil. Es un intento que indudablemente fracasará, alzando de nuevo el peligro de un conflicto generalizado en el Medio Oriente.

La guerra civil en Líbano ha dejado aproximadamente 9,500 muertos durante los últimos nueve meses y unos 20,000 heridos. En un país del tamaño de los Estados Unidos esto equivaldría a cerca de dos millones de víctimas.

Durante las últimas luchas, los derechistas cristianos invadieron los barrios pobres de Karantina y Maslakh en Beirut. Las vecindades fueron arrolladas y quemadas. La cadena de emisoras de televisión CBS, durante su noticiero del 20 de enero, mostró los resultados de una masacre en la cual trece hombres y una mujer fueron asesinados por fuerzas derechistas.

En un despacho del 21 de enero proveniente de Beirut, el corresponsal del *New York Times* James Markham informó que, "Wardah Zurarikat, una mujer de 35 años, abrazando a su hijo de once años que lloraba, dijo que unos matones derechistas habían asesinado a tres de sus hermanos y cuatro sobrinos ante sus propios ojos. . . ."

Las familias de aquéllos que fueron masacrados—miles de personas en total—fueron echadas de sus casas. "Es exactamente lo que sucedió en Palestina," dijo un palestino citado por Markham cuando observaba a los refugiados que buscaban protección en una escuela.

La responsabilidad de la matanza y la miseria que ha sufrido el pueblo libanés cae rotundamente sobre el imperialismo francés y norteamericano.

Francia se apoderó de lo que es actualmente Líbano después de la Primera Guerra Mundial. Para facilitar su dominio de la región, los franceses opusieron la población cristiana a los musulmanes, en casi la misma manera en que los británicos opusieron los judíos a los árabes en Palestina. Los

cristianos, originalmente una escasa mayoría dentro de las fronteras artificialmente delineadas de Siria, fueron asegurados una posición privilegiada que persiste hoy en día.

En una serie de artículos sobre Líbano que aparecieron en los números del 20-25 de septiembre del diario parisiense *Le Monde*, Eric Rouleau explica que "los cristianos, que constituyen cerca del 40 por ciento de la población libanesa, tienen sólo entre un tercio y la mitad del nivel de analfabetismo que los musulmanes, y comprenden la mayoría de los graduados universitarios, hombres de negocios, funcionarios gubernamentales y profesionistas. En general, su nivel de vida es más alto. . . ."

Esta desigualdad social es mantenida y acentuada por un arreglo político discriminatorio impuesto por los franceses en 1943. Las diversas sectas cristianas han sido garantizadas una mayoría de 6 a 5 sobre los musulmanes en el parlamento libanés y en la burocracia oficial. El puesto más poderoso en el gobierno, la presidencia, ha sido reservado para un cristiano maronita, así como el puesto de jefe del estado mayor de ejército.

Este sistema arcaico de estratificación religiosa es doblemente antidemocrático. No tan sólo discrimina en base a la religión, sino también discrimina contra lo que ha llegado a ser la mayoría del país desde el último censo, tomado en 1932. La mayoría musulmana merece pleno apoyo en su lucha para eliminar este sistema discriminatorio, que fue salvado en 1958 sólo debido a la intervención de más de 14,000 tropas estadounidenses.

La lucha musulmana por plenos derechos democráticos en Líbano contiene un poder muy explosivo debido a la situación de las masas. Rouleau describe la pobreza:

Seiscientos mil personas están amontonadas en el "cordón de miseria" que estrangula a Beirut y los suburbios. En la metrópoli financiera del Medio Oriente, donde los bancos se derrumban bajo el peso del dinero disponible no invertido, más de un tercio de la población subsiste a punto de morirse de hambre. El nivel de mortalidad es dos o tres veces mayor que el promedio nacional. . . . Para sus hijos, la escuela y la asistencia médica están virtualmente fuera de su alcance.

Muchos cristianos comparten estas condiciones, pero debido a que la comunidad cristiana en general es relativamente privilegiada, las fuerzas extremadamente derechistas han logrado construir un movimien-

to basado en la defensa de los privilegios de los cristianos contra la mayoría musulmana.

El nuevo cese de hostilidades, el vigésimo tercero desde que empezó la guerra civil el abril pasado, fue saludado como un "acuerdo político global" por el Presidente libanés Suleiman Franjeh el 22 de enero. Franjeh, el jefe del Partido Liberal Nacional Cristiano, tenía buenas razones para estar satisfecho. En vez de eliminar el sistema de cuotas religiosas, el acuerdo lo perpetúa, haciendo al mismo tiempo lo que los redactores de *Wall Street Journal* llamaron con aprobación el 23 de enero "un ajuste relativamente moderado."

Aunque los detalles del acuerdo son todavía secretos, la línea general no lo es. Estipula que los puestos parlamentarios serán divididos equitativamente entre los musulmanes y los cristianos, y que el parlamento elegirá el primer ministro musulmán (nombrado actualmente por el presidente cristiano). Además, se eliminarán las cuotas sectarias en los trabajos inferiores de la burocracia oficial, pero el nombramiento del presidente como cristiano maronita será señalado explícitamente en la constitución libanesa.

Al mantener el sistema de cuotas religiosas, el acuerdo asienta la base para nuevas luchas comunales en Líbano. Pero la perspectiva de los dirigentes burgueses de la lucha musulmana siempre fue la de usar las demandas de las masas como fichas de negociación en sus maniobras gubernamentales. Muchos de aquéllos que se autodenominan izquierdistas, como Kamal Jumblatt, el jefe del Partido Socialista Progresista, han demostrado también su deseo de participar como ministros en el régimen capitalista discriminatorio.

El acuerdo que se planteó ha sido fuertemente apoyado también por el gobierno de Siria. Es más, se llegó a este acuerdo en las negociaciones supervisadas por el Ministro del Exterior sirio Abdel Halim Khaddam, y el ejército y los jefes de las fuerzas aéreas sirias. Los comités establecidos para supervisar la tregua incluyen a los oficiales sirios quienes participarán en la implementación del acuerdo.

El Problema de Palestina

Un factor adicional en la lucha libanesa es la presencia de aproximadamente 300,000 a 400,000 palestinos en el país—más

del 10 por ciento de la población. La última y más destructiva etapa en la guerra civil se inició el 5 de enero cuando el movimiento falangista semifascista bloqueó el campamento de refugiados palestinos, Tall Zaatar. A este paso le siguió el bloqueo de otros dos campamentos de refugiados, uno de los cuales fue tomado por derechistas el 14 de enero.

En un despacho del 10 de enero, el reportero del *Times* Markham citó a Shafik al-Hout, dirigente del local en Beirut de la Organización de Liberación de Palestina (OLP), quien dijo, "Yo considero que lo que sucedió en Líbano—lo que todavía sucede en Líbano—es una prueba de la habilidad de los palestinos de sobrevivir en Líbano."

Los falangistas, que se presentan como los defensores del "occidente cristiano ante las hordas musulmanas," han favorecido durante mucho tiempo la supresión de las organizaciones palestinas en Líbano. Su defensa ideológica de un estado dominado por los cristianos es paralela a los argumentos de los sionistas. Los falangistas también temen la creciente militancia y organización de las masas musulmanas que han sido impulsadas por el ejemplo de los palestinos. "Parte de la resistencia [palestina] aliada con la izquierda a nivel internacional piensa destrozarnos nuestro sistema socio-económico," le dijo el dirigente falangista Pierre Gemayel al periodista de *Le Monde* Rouleau.

La estrategia de los falangistas ha sido la de provocar una confrontación en la que esperaban que el ejército dominado por los cristianos derrotaría y destruiría a las organizaciones palestinas.

Las unidades del ejército y de las fuerzas aéreas han luchado abiertamente al lado de las fuerzas derechistas, pero no pudieron cambiar el curso de los eventos, parcialmente porque las mismas divisiones que han afectado el resto de Líbano se reflejan en las fuerzas militares. El reportero del *New York Times* Eric Pace citó el testimonio de unos guerrilleros palestinos en una población en el oriente de Líbano en un despacho del 23 de enero: "Los guerrilleros dijeron que 200 o más soldados del ejército libanés habían desertado en esta región, varios de ellos para unirse a milicias izquierdistas."

Los palestinos en Líbano fueron reforzados por varios miles de hombres del Ejército de Liberación de Palestina, una unidad basada en Siria y abastecida por los sirios nominalmente bajo el control de la Organización de Liberación de Palestina. Cuando se dio el cese de hostilidades, los musulmanes libaneses y sus aliados palestinos controlaban virtualmente todo el país fuera de la región predominantemente cristiana del monte Líbano y los enclaves cristianos en Beirut.

A pesar de esto, las fuerzas derechistas en la comunidad cristiana han amenazado con

provocar una nueva ronda de luchas si piensan que sus privilegios son amenazados. Un representante del partido falangista le dijo al corresponsal del *Times* Markham que le dirección falangista había "aceptado el cese de hostilidades, pero en cuanto a lo demás [del acuerdo] es un signo de interrogación."

A pesar de que los cristianos derechistas han contrapuesto el patriotismo libanés a lo que ven como una amenaza del nacionalismo árabe, han dejado claro que prefieren la división del país mucho más que el otorgamiento de sus derechos a los musulmanes. Semejante división sobre líneas religiosas sería un golpe terrible contra las masas árabes. Crearía nuevos refugiados privados de sus casas y sus derechos, y otro enclave reaccionario parecido a Israel y totalmente dependiente del imperialismo para su supervivencia.

¿Una Oportunidad Dorada?

Hasta el momento Washington ha escogido contener a su estado-cliente israelita, pero la posibilidad de otra explosión en Líbano y una guerra más amplia en el Medio Oriente es muy real. El humor entre los círculos gubernamentales en los Estados Unidos fue indicado por la conclusión de un editorial del *New York Times* el 20 de enero, que advierte a los estados árabes que "ni uno solo saldrá ileso de una lucha de rapiña por el poder sobre Líbano."

Existe en realidad el peligro de una "lucha de rapiña por el poder sobre Líbano," pero la fuente de esta amenaza es la determinación de los imperialistas estadounidenses y sus ayudantes israelitas de no permitir que la mayoría del pueblo libanés decida el futuro de su propio país.

Desde el punto de vista del régimen israelita, la agonía de Líbano, junto con la amenaza de una guerra más amplia, es una oportunidad dorada. Los dirigentes israelitas no han mantenido secreto su punto de vista de que una victoria militar aplastante, como la que obtuvieron en la guerra del Medio Oriente en 1967, aliviaría las crecientes presiones sobre el estado sionista a nivel internacional.

Esta perspectiva fue elaborada en un artículo el 5 de diciembre escrito por Chagai Eshed en el diario israelita *Davar*. "Es un poco difícil negar el hecho de que Israel se encuentra en una trampa política y militar," dijo, agregando, "La cantidad de estados que reconocen al OLP como el representante del pueblo palestino ya supera la cantidad de estados que mantienen relaciones diplomáticas con Israel."

Chagai argumenta, "La trampa se está cerrando y como andan las cosas actualmente, no hay otra salida más que romperla mediante la fuerza."

Esta amenaza fue repetida el 4 de enero por el propio Primer Ministro Yitzhak

Rabin, quien advirtió que Israel tenía "suficiente fuerza militar para proveerse con campo de maniobra política, pero posiblemente tendríamos que expresarla [la fuerza militar] más pronto de lo que muchos piensan."

Los dirigentes israelitas encaran una tentación especial en Líbano porque durante mucho tiempo han codiciado las aguas del Río Litani, que atraviesa el sur de Líbano a unas quince millas de la frontera de Israel. No tan sólo les daría otra "frontera defendible," sino también permitiría a los israelitas unirse a los falangistas contra los palestinos en Líbano.

Semejante forma de pensar se reflejaba indudablemente en el llamado el 19 de enero de Shmuel Tamir, un dirigente del bloque derechista de Likud en el Knesset [el parlamento] israelita, para una discusión parlamentaria inmediata sobre "la participación siria en Líbano y el establecimiento de un estado terrorista en la frontera norteña de Israel."

Terence Smith informó desde Jerusalén en el *New York Times* el 20 de enero que el mismo día de la declaración de Tamir, *Yediot Aharonot*, uno de los diarios israelitas, llamó "al gobierno a declarar un estado de alerta militar como respuesta a la penetración de las unidades del ejército palestino en Líbano."

El día siguiente el gobierno israelita divulgó la noticia de que estaba fortaleciendo sus fuerzas militares a lo largo de la frontera libanesa.

El inestable cese de hostilidades que ha sido impuesto en Líbano podría deshacerse en cualquier momento. "Aún si se pudiera pasar por la crisis inmediata sin provocar una guerra más amplia," dijeron los redactores de *New York Times* el 21 de enero, "la amenaza a Líbano de un ejército palestino que responda a órdenes provenientes de Damasco no puede pasar desapercibida en Israel, Jordania, Egipto y otros países cercanos. Líbano e Israel plantean problemas bastante diferentes para el atormentado Medio Oriente, sin embargo los dos están directamente influenciados por la presencia continua y la creciente militancia de la población de los 'refugiados' palestinos."

Este llamado ligeramente encubierto para la supresión del movimiento palestino en Líbano, aunque apunta aparentemente hacia los regímenes "moderados" en la región, está claramente destinado a invocar la amenaza de la intervención israelita.

Así como los "demócratas" imperialistas en Washington, los gobernantes israelitas hacen causa común con las fuerzas más reaccionarias y antidemocráticas en el mundo con el objetivo de preservar sus privilegios. La "democracia" israelita no está fundada tan sólo sobre la expulsión del pueblo palestino de su tierra, sino también sobre la existencia continua del discriminatorio régimen capitalista en Líbano. □

La Ofensiva Capitalista en Portugal

Por David Frankel

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "The Capitalist Offensive in Portugal" que apareció en el número del 26 de enero de *Intercontinental Press*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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El gobierno portugués ha incrementado su ofensiva contra la clase trabajadora y sus aliados. El ataque ha sido cauteloso, reflejando el temor del régimen de provocar un nuevo ascenso, pero sus objetivos son claros. Apuntan hacia la restricción y el retroceso de las conquistas económicas y políticas obtenidas por las masas portuguesas desde el golpe del 25 de abril de 1974, que derrocó a la dictadura salazarista.

En el plano económico, el gobierno del Primer Ministro José Pinheiro de Azevedo hizo un llamado el 20 de diciembre cuando anunciaba las nuevas garantías de la inversión extranjera, para "la aceptación voluntaria y conciente de sacrificios." El significado de esta política fue ampliado por Azevedo el 23 de diciembre. Durante un discurso televisado dijo que la suerte de la economía dependía de "la disciplina de los sindicatos y obreros." Según el corresponsal de *New York Times* Marvine Howe, "Advirtió que las demandas salariales y una tasa de empleo exageradamente alta habían causado el cierre de varios negocios."

El MFA (Movimento das Forças Armadas)—ayudado por los dirigentes stalinistas y social demócratas—ha estado tratando de obligar a las masas trabajadoras a pagar por la crisis económica capitalista desde que tomó el poder en abril de 1974. En determinado momento este objetivo fue disfrazado por el llamado demagógico para ganar "la batalla por la producción." Ahora Azevedo define el programa del MFA más abiertamente, hablando de "una tasa de empleo exageradamente alta" precisamente cuando el 13 por ciento de la fuerza de trabajo está desempleado.

Marvine Howe describe el impacto del programa de austeridad del régimen en el *New York Times* el 11 de enero:

El llamado del gobierno para sacrificios tuvo su impacto más fuerte con la eliminación de los subsidios sobre productos esenciales y las posteriores alzas tremendas de los precios.

Un análisis del incremento en el costo de la vida recientemente publicado por el semanario *Tempo* reveló alzas dramáticas en Lisboa: los huevos cuestan 1.60 dólares la docena, un incremento del 33 por ciento; las papas han subido el 21 por

ciento y las zanahorias el 140 por ciento.

Los altos precios de los alimentos han afectado más severamente a Lisboa, pero el precio de la gasolina, las estampillas postales y el transporte han tenido su efecto a nivel nacional.

El precio de la gasolina de alto octanaje ha subido el 40 por ciento y cuesta actualmente 2.45 dólares el galón, y los precios del transporte público han subido por un promedio de 100 por ciento.

Otro aspecto de la ofensiva por parte del gobierno se manifestó el 9 de enero cuando el régimen anunció que su programa de reforma agraria no sería aplicado de ninguna manera en las dos terceras partes del norte de Portugal, ni en algunas regiones del sur.

El régimen también lanzó nuevos ataques contra los derechos de asamblea y protesta. Escogió la ocasión de una manifestación el 1 de enero en Oporto, que se llevó a cabo para exigir la libertad de 140 personas detenidas después del golpe del 25 de noviembre, para probar sus opciones represivas.

Los miembros de la Guardia Nacional Republicana abrieron fuego sobre un grupo de 3,000 personas, matando a tres e hiriendo a varios otros. El gobierno defendió los disparos y declaró que la manifestación había sido parte de un plan para permitirles a los presos fugarse de la cárcel. Además, se prohibieron las manifestaciones fuera de las prisiones en Oporto.

Otro ataque contra el derecho a la manifestación fue revelado en el número del 3 de enero del diario bonaerense *La Opinión*. Un despacho sin firma citó un comunicado del gobierno de Oporto, que arguía que "la manifestación era ilegal" porque sus organizadores no notificaron al presidente del Consejo Municipal con cuarenta y ocho horas de anticipo acerca de sus planes.

Una manifestación parecida en Lisboa el 1 de enero fue disuelta por los comandos, quienes dispersaron a la multitud con autos blindados y disparando sobre sus cabezas.

El uso del régimen de la Guardia Nacional Republicana, la policía paramilitar conocida por su carácter derechista, no fue un accidente. Un informe proveniente de Oporto en el *Washington Post* el 3 de enero señaló que "Se está impulsando una campaña masiva de reclutamiento de 10,000 hombres extras por medio de anuncios en la televisión."

También han habido indicios de que el gobierno de Azevedo intenta promover el

sentimiento contra "los agitadores extranjeros." Uno de los que fue asesinado en la manifestación de Oporto era un estudiante alemán de veintidós años, Günther Bruns, quien según el gobierno estaba "interfiriendo en la política portuguesa."

Según un informe de Harold Sieve desde Lisboa en el número del 11 de enero del *Sunday Telegraph* de Londres, "Portugal ha comenzado a expulsar a los primeros de los miles de revolucionarios extranjeros que, desde su punto de vista, han estado fomentando la agitación extremista y usando al país como un campo de entrenamiento para la subversión y el terror."

Sieve agregó: "Los gobernantes militares se mueven rápidamente después de haber hecho su amenaza de expulsión la semana pasada. El Supremo Consejo de la Revolución en seguida denunció a los 'elementos extranjeros' a menudo indeseados en sus propios países y propuso alguna legislación para tratar con ellos."

El paso más reciente en el ataque del régimen contra los derechos democráticos se dio el 13 de enero cuando el dominante Consejo de la Revolución propuso un plan que aseguraría la continuación del gobierno militar hasta 1980. En un despacho proveniente de Lisboa en el *Washington Post* el 18 de enero, Bernard Nossiter dijo que "el plan militar le permitiría al Consejo disolver la legislación electa y vetar gran parte de sus decretos sobre absolutamente todo, desde los asuntos exteriores hasta la defensa."

"Por cierto, este plan no tiene la última palabra. Los partidos políticos civiles lo están examinando y se tiene que obtener su acuerdo antes de que sea efectivo. Es probable que insistirán sobre la reducción del papel de los militares y es posible que obtengan algunas concesiones. Pero en última instancia, parece que el poder permanecerá donde ha estado, en manos de aquellos que hicieron el golpe del 25 de abril de 1974."

Un despacho del 18 de enero proveniente de Lisboa en el *New York Times* citó al jefe del Partido Socialista Mário Soares, quien denunció el plan. "La nueva proposición es antidemocrática y consagra la protección militar sobre nuestra vida política," dijo.

Desafortunadamente, Soares se ha negado a oponerse a la ofensiva capitalista que abrió el camino al último ataque. La clase obrera en su conjunto ha sido profundamente dividida y desorientada por la política de los dirigentes reformistas de los partidos Socialista y Comunista.

En vez de romper con el MFA, los dirigentes del PS y PC han participado desde el principio en el gobierno capitalista y han competido para ganar la posición como el aliado privilegiado del MFA. En vez de intentar unir a las masas en defensa de sus intereses básicos, los dirigentes del PS y PC han actuado como agentes del gobierno

capitalista en la clase obrera, apoyando incondicionalmente la política del MFA.

Al tomar la responsabilidad por la política capitalista del MFA e intentar hacer pasar los gobiernos capitalistas como progresistas y revolucionarios, los dirigentes reformistas han desorientado a la clase obrera y han abierto la puerta a las fuerzas derechistas.

Esto se demostró el 12 de enero en un mitin de los agricultores derechistas en Braga. Un orador le dijo a la multitud de aproximadamente 10,000, según el corresponsal del *Washington Post* Nossiter, que "Aquéllos hombres que nunca han salido de la Plaza de Comercio [asiento del Ministerio de Agricultura en Lisboa] y que nunca han estado en los campos, no pueden determinar nuestras leyes. Si nos quieren ayudar, que nos traigan fertilizantes baratos y máquinas para trabajar esta tierra infértil. Que construyan caminos . . . Que nos den precios justos y crédito."

Esto es precisamente lo que haría un gobierno verdaderamente revolucionario basado en los obreros y campesinos. Al utilizar semejante política, los revolucionarios cubanos dirigidos por Fidel Castro pudieron llevar a cabo la reforma agraria tal vez más completa en el mundo, con el apoyo entusiasta de los pequeños campesinos.

Debido a que los dirigentes stalinistas y social demócratas se oponen a la revolución socialista en Portugal, o en cualquier otro lugar, se han negado a retirar su confianza en el régimen capitalista. El 17 de enero la federación sindical controlada por los stalinistas promovió una manifestación contra la congelación de salarios. Pero así como en el conflicto anterior del PC con el gobierno de Azevedo, la dirección stalinista espera poder utilizar semejantes manifestaciones para presionar al MFA para que le conceda más puestos en el gobierno. Además, los stalinistas esperan usar el problema económico para ganar votos en las elecciones venideras a la Asamblea Constituyente.

El reportero del *New York Times* Howe calcula que unas 25,000 personas participaron en la manifestación del 17 de enero, mucho menos de lo que el PC ha podido hacer solo para movilizar a las masas en ocasiones previas.

Sin embargo, todavía existe un potencial enorme. La crisis económica y la ofensiva capitalista seguirán y se profundizarán. La clase obrera portuguesa ha sido confundida y maldirigida por los dirigentes stalinistas, social demócratas, ultraizquierdistas, y centristas, pero no ha sido derrotada. Las movilizaciones de masas de los trabajadores de la construcción a mediados de noviembre dan un vistazo del poder que puede ser logrado por medio de una lucha unida de la clase obrera en defensa de sus intereses. □

Petición a Favor de Siete Disidentes Iraníes

¿Quiénes Son los Presos Políticos del Sha?



EL SHA

[La siguiente es una traducción del artículo "Who Are the Shah's Political Prisoners?" que apareció en el número del 19 de enero de *Intercontinental Press*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

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"Ningún país en el mundo tiene peor récord en cuanto a los derechos humanos que Irán."

Esta declaración de Martin Ennals, Secretario General de Amnesty International, fue citada en una declaración a la prensa el 25 de diciembre de 1975 por el Committee for Artistic and Intellectual Freedom in Iran [CAIFI—Comité por la Libertad Artística e Intelectual en Irán].*

El comité, una organización dedicada a publicar la difícil situación de las docenas de miles de presos políticos en Irán, demuestra lo correcto de la declaración de Ennals, centrándose en los casos de siete intelectuales prominentes quienes se encuentran detenidos en las notorias prisiones del Sha.

Los siete son sólo unos cuantos de los millares, cuyo tratamiento brutal en manos de SAVAK, la policía secreta del Sha, ha

despertado el interés internacional. Son los siguientes:

Atefeh Gorgin. Gorgin, poeta, editora y periodista, ha estado presa durante casi dos años por haber publicado una antología de literatura contemporánea, y le quedan todavía tres años por cumplir. "Presumiblemente," dice CAIFI, "se le ha dado este tratamiento tan severo por ser la esposa del poeta Khosrow Golsorkhi, quien fue ejecutado en 1974.

Vida Hadjebi Tabrizi. Tabrizi, socióloga e investigadora en la Universidad de Tehran, fue detenida en julio de 1972 y ha sido sentenciada a ocho años de prisión por una corte militar secreta. Los procedimientos de su juicio, las acusaciones, y los hechos acerca de su detención nunca han sido anunciados por el gobierno iraní. Tabrizi ha sido sometida a una tortura tan severa que ha perdido todo el sentido en las manos y los pies, se le ha debilitado el corazón, ha desarrollado mala circulación y meningitis, y a dejado de menstruar.

Fereydoun Tonokaboni. Tonokaboni, un novelista, fue arrestado en marzo de 1974 por haber publicado el libro *Dinero, La Medida del Valor*, una sátira de la situación política en Irán. Procesado secretamente en una corte militar y sentenciado a dos años de prisión, Tonokaboni ha sido torturado.

Tonokaboni fue arrestado por primera vez en 1971 por haber publicado la sátira *Notas de Una Ciudad Turbulenta*, a pesar de haber sido aprobada por los censores. En aquel entonces, era miembro activo del Sindicato de Escritores Iraníes.

Nasser Rahmani-Nejad. Rahmani-Nejad, dramaturgo, director y crítico, fue detenido en febrero de 1975, junto con todo su grupo de teatro, cuando se estaban preparando para presentar *El Parásito* de Gorky en Tehran. Según un informe el 4 de noviembre en *Le Monde*, fue procesado en una corte militar y sentenciado a once años de prisión.

Saeed Soltanpour. Soltanpour, actor, dramaturgo y poeta, fue procesado secretamente hace poco tiempo por su participación en los preparativos de la obra de Gorky. Fue condenado a cinco años de prisión. En 1970 una de sus obras, *Los Maestros*, que trata sobre la vida de dos escritores disidentes iraníes, fue prohibida también, conduciendo a un arresto anterior.

Mohsen Yalfani. Yalfani, director, traductor y crítico, es íntimo amigo de Rahmani-Nejad y Soltanpour, y ha participado en las obras escritas y dirigidas por ellos. Ha sido sentenciado a cinco años de prisión en

*853 Broadway, Suite 414, New York, New York 10003.

relación con su participación en la obra de Gorky.

Mahmoud Dowlat-Abadi. Dowlat-Abadi, uno de los escritores más ampliamente leído por la generación joven de Irán, ha escrito una docena de obras de ficción durante los últimos diez años. Estas incluyen la novela *El Cuento de Baba Sobhan*, convertida posteriormente en la película *La Tierra*, que se hizo famosa como un comentario social

muy aplaudido sobre la vida de los campesinos en el Medio Oriente.

Dowlat-Abadi es uno de los grandes favoritos de la juventud iraní, y las ediciones populares de sus obras han sido impresas una y otra vez. Fue sentenciado a dos años de prisión por su asociación con la obra de Gorky.

En su declaración a la prensa, CAIFI enfatizó su confianza en que "la opinión

pública internacional no permanecerá indiferente hacia este ataque descarado por parte del Sha contra la libertad de expresión en Irán." El comité les urge a todos aquéllos que aprecian las libertades civiles a exigir la libertad inmediata para los siete presos políticos.

Se pueden enviar protestas al Sha de Irán, Palacio Niavaran, Tehran. □

Una Valoración Trotskista

Bajo el 'Estado de Emergencia' de Gandhi

[La siguiente entrevista de un corresponsal de *Intercontinental Press* con un trotskista indio en Delhi el 2 de diciembre de 1975 fue publicada en el número del 12 de enero de *Intercontinental Press*. La traducción es de *Intercontinental Press*.]

* * *

Pregunta. ¿Qué, en tu opinión, significa el estado de emergencia que se ha proclamado en la India?

Respuesta. Ha significado un gran retroceso para la lucha de clases en la India. La burguesía ha usado plenamente el estado de emergencia para imponer su política anti-clase obrera y sus soluciones para la crisis mortal que encara en el plano económico, y para tratar con el descontento de masas que se venía desarrollando. El viraje hacia la derecha en el plano económico y la tendencia hacia el autoritarismo en la política han destacado más y más. La economía ha sido estabilizada durante la coyuntura actual, y la burguesía intenta integrar el movimiento obrero cada vez más al aparato oficial del estado.

P. ¿Qué ha sucedido exactamente bajo la emergencia?

R. Bajo la emergencia, el pueblo ha sido privado de sus derechos básicos. Estos incluyen especialmente el derecho de conocer los hechos. Bajo la precensura de la prensa que se ha impuesto, se tienen que someter todos los artículos al censor antes de ser publicados.

Se ha arrestado a mucha gente. El régimen no ha admitido nunca el número de detenidos, y es difícil llegar a la cifra exacta debido a la censura. Los cálculos llegan a 80,000 y 100,000 personas. La mayoría de los presos políticos proviene de las veintiséis organizaciones prohibidas, pero también incluye a los disidentes dentro del partido en el poder, el Congress Party [Partido del Congreso], en los estados de

Uttar Pradesh, Bihar y Madhya Pradesh.

No hay ninguna información acerca de las condiciones en las prisiones, pero lo más probable es que son pésimas. Esta cantidad de nuevos prisioneros es mayor que la cantidad de presos políticos detenidos anteriormente—unos 30,000 denominados "naxalitas." Este es el nombre que el gobierno les pone a varios oponentes de izquierda, aunque sean o no verdaderos naxalitas.*

P. ¿Cuál ha sido el impacto económico de la emergencia?

R. Ha sido muy negativo para la clase obrera. Los "sobresueldos" (salarios suspendidos) han sido recortados desde el mínimo de 8.33% hasta el 4%. Anteriormente, bajo el sistema de sobresueldos del gobierno, se suponía que parte de los salarios de los obreros iba a ser suspendida hasta fines de año, cuando se les pagaría una cantidad mínima extra del 8.33%. Teóricamente, el sobresueldo podría ser más alto si se obtuvieran más ganancias, pero en todo caso sería un mínimo del 8.33%.

En septiembre el gobierno redujo el pago mínimo al 4%, y lo relacionó a la producción, la productividad y las ganancias. Si no hay ganancias, las industrias no tienen que pagar nada. Y si las ganancias son altas, el sobresueldo sería de todos modos el 4%. No sólo los verdaderos salarios, sino también los salarios nominales para la clase trabajadora en su conjunto han sido recortados como resultado de la reducción de los sobresueldos, la inflación, el desempleo, los despidos, etc.

En contraposición a esto, las cosas han mejorado para la gran burguesía. Por ejemplo, los reglamentos acerca de los permisos de importación-exportación, la

instalación de máquinas, etc., han sido liberalizados. Se han permitido mayores facilidades para viajar con el objetivo de expandir la exportación. El otorgamiento de réditos extras—acciones extras para accionistas, que superan los dividendos al contado—ha sido permitido de nuevo. Varias concesiones sobre los impuestos también han sido otorgadas. El régimen ha anunciado mayores concesiones para poner en circulación dinero "negro" (dinero sobre el cual no se paga ningún impuesto).

P. ¿Qué me puedes decir acerca de los derechos sindicales?

R. Los sindicatos han sido privados del derecho de huelga por aumentos salariales y mejores condiciones de trabajo. El mecanismo para las negociaciones será más restringida que antes, y los únicos sindicatos que serán reconocidos para los propósitos de la negociación serán aquéllos que apoyan la emergencia. Actualmente hay sólo tres federaciones nacionales de este tipo: la Indian National Trade Union Congress [INTUC—Congreso de Sindicatos Nacionales de la India], controlada por el partido gubernamental, el Congress Party; la All-Indian Trade Union Congress [AITUC—Congreso Sindical Nacional], controlada por el Partido Comunista de la India (PCI); y la HMS (Hind Mazdoor Sabha—Asamblea de Trabajadores Indios), dirigida por los ex social demócratas, la mayoría de los cuales se unieron al Congress Party en el poder.

Dos otras federaciones han sido puestas a un lado por el gobierno y los patronos. Son la Centre of Indian Trade Unions [CITU—Centro de Sindicatos Indios], controlada por el Partido Comunista de la India (Marxista), el PCM; y la Trade Union Congress [TUC—Congreso Sindical], controlada por el Revolutionary Socialist Party [PSR—Partido Socialista Revolucionario], una formación centrista.

*Miembros del Communist Party of India (Marxist-Leninist). El término "naxalitas" se deriva de la insurrección campesina de 1967 en Naxalbari, Bengala Occidental.—IP

P. ¿Cuál ha sido la respuesta de las organizaciones obreras a la emergencia y a las nuevas condiciones que han surgido?

R. No han habido acciones sindicales contra la emergencia, ni siquiera por aquellos sindicatos dirigidos por el PCM y el PSR, que se oponen a la emergencia. La INTUC, la AITUC, y la HMS apoyan la emergencia, aunque existen noticias de una división dentro de la HMS sobre esto. Se han dado protestas verbales contra la reducción de los sobresueldos, aún dentro de la INTUC, pero no se han organizado acciones de masas.

El PCI pro-Moscú apoya la emergencia y está estrechamente ligado al Congress Party en el poder. El PCM y el PSR se oponen a la emergencia, pero no han hecho nada en el sentido de acciones de masas. El PCM, que tiene bastante fuerza en algunas regiones, se ha alineado de una forma sin principios con algunos de los partidos derechistas que se oponen a Indira Gandhi. También lo ha hecho el PSR.

Hay indicios de que el PCM está desorganizado, y que algunos disidentes dentro del partido acusan a la dirección de haber minimizado su oposición a la emergencia. El Secretario General del PCM P. Sundaraiya ha renunciado y ha sido reemplazado por Jyoti Basu de Bengala Occidental. Los trotskistas de la Communist League of India [Liga Comunista de la India] se oponen a la emergencia, pero son una fuerza muy pequeña.

P. ¿Han habido protestas de masas contra la emergencia?

R. Hubo algunas protestas al principio en varios estados, pero en general la gente quedó pasmada. Además, hubo una falta de acción por parte de la dirección de las organizaciones obreras de masas, y aún peor, abierto apoyo a la emergencia por parte del PCI. Esto ayudó a desorientar a las masas.

Sin embargo, un barómetro significativo del sentimiento de las masas se vio recientemente en el estado de Gujarat, donde se llevaron a cabo elecciones municipales en varias ciudades a fines de noviembre, resultando en una gran derrota para el Congress Party de Indira Gandhi.

Por supuesto, es posible que Gujarat es un poco diferente que los demás estados. El gobierno estatal ahí ha estado en manos de una coalición de partidos agrupados en el Janata Morcha (Frente Popular). Estos partidos se han opuesto al partido en el poder durante mucho tiempo. Los partidos en el Janata Morcha son extremadamente derechistas, pero debido a que se oponen al gobierno central y al Congress Party de Gandhi, han intentado mantener la puerta abierta a la crítica en Gujarat. Por lo tanto, no han impuesto tantas restricciones sobre

la vida política que en otras partes.

Es por eso que el gobierno central procedió a convocar elecciones municipales a pesar de los "consejos" al contrario por parte del régimen de Gandhi. (En la India,



The Current

GANDHI

los gobiernos estatales tienen la autoridad de convocar elecciones municipales, mientras que el gobierno central tiene el poder sobre las elecciones parlamentarias.) Por lo tanto se llevaron a cabo elecciones en tres ciudades principales, Rajkot, Surat y Vadodara (Baroda) a fines de noviembre, y están planeadas para fines de diciembre en la capital del estado, Ahmedabad.

Estas elecciones se convirtieron en una prueba de fuerza entre el Janata Morcha y el Congress Party dominante, y en realidad fueron parte de una larga lucha entre los dos. El año pasado, a principios de 1974, se dieron grandes ascensos de masas en Gujarat—"motines por el pan" bajo condiciones de sequía y hambre, y protestas contra la inflación y la corrupción. Los partidos derechistas que posteriormente se unieron en el Janata Morcha pudieron lograr la dirección de este ascenso de masas y la usaron para derribar al gobierno estatal que había estado bajo el control del Congress Party de Indira Gandhi.

El régimen de Indira Gandhi respondió disolviendo la Asamblea Legislativa del Estado e imponiendo la autoridad presidencial. Eso fue en marzo de 1974.

Pero un año más tarde, bajo la amenaza de una huelga por parte del Majoor Mahajan, el poderoso sindicato de Gujarat, que comprende a más del 80% de los trabajadores organizados, el régimen de Gandhi se vio obligado a convocar elecciones a nivel estatal en junio de 1975. Indira Gandhi usó todo su prestigio en estas elecciones. Hizo un esfuerzo personal tremendo, apareciendo

en reuniones en 120 de los 180 distritos existentes. Como resultado, su régimen sufrió un golpe tremendo cuando las elecciones de Gujarat resultaron en una aplastante victoria para la coalición de Janata Morcha.

En realidad, este cambio amenazó con darle un nuevo impulso al titubeante movimiento de J.P. Narayan en Bihar, y suscitó el peligro de que ese movimiento de oposición atravesara la India. Esta posibilidad fue un factor importante en la decisión de Indira Gandhi de declarar un estado de emergencia inmediatamente después. Así, cuando las elecciones fueron convocadas de nuevo en Gujarat, esta vez bajo las condiciones de un estado de emergencia, y en desafío a la presión de Gandhi contra las elecciones, lo que estaba involucrado era una verdadera prueba de fuerza.

Por supuesto, la oposición del Janata Morcha a Indira Gandhi era una oposición derechista. La denunciaron como títere de Moscú. Pero también lanzaron una campaña contra el estado de emergencia y por el derecho democrático a disidir. Esto logró que las masas respondieran y como resultado el Congress Party de Indira Gandhi fue derrotado en estas elecciones municipales. El Janata Morcha recibió la abrumadora mayoría del 75%. Pienso que este voto debería de ser interpretado no como un voto de la derecha, sino como un voto contra Gandhi y contra la emergencia.

P. ¿Qué actitud tomaron los partidos obreros hacia este proceso?

R. En Gujarat, los partidos obreros son pequeños y débiles, y por lo tanto, no estuvieron en una posición para movilizar a amplias capas de masas o tener algún efecto notable sobre los acontecimientos. Pero es posible juzgar cómo encararon los acontecimientos de la mejor manera posible.

El PCI apoya el estado de emergencia, y lógicamente no lo denunció. Lanzó algunos candidatos en las elecciones municipales, pero eran campañas simbólicas. El PCI a nivel nacional no les dio un verdadero respaldo—una de las razones siendo que querían que la mayoría de los esfuerzos y energías fueran canalizados en apoyo al Congress Party de Gandhi.

El PCM, aunque se oponía a la emergencia, adoptó una política completamente oportunista, sin principios, de aliarse con el Janata Morcha. En Baroda lanzaron candidatos oficialmente en la planilla del Janata Morcha—o sea, bajo el programa derechista del Janata Morcha y bajo su disciplina. No mantuvieron ninguna independencia hacia el exterior, ni siquiera el símbolo del partido. Dos de sus candidatos fueron electos, y en realidad es todo lo que querían.

Sin embargo, en Baroda se dio el ejemplo del método revolucionario, principista, lle-

vado a cabo por la Communist League, la sección india de la Cuarta Internacional. Cuando se organizaron marchas contra la emergencia anteriormente, la Communist League participó, pero como un bloque independiente, diferenciándose claramente del Janata Morcha, y gritando sus propias consignas independientes, anticapitalistas. Cuando fueron convocadas las elecciones municipales en Baroda, la Communist League pudo lanzar dos candidatos para el Consejo Municipal, ambos obreros militantes que participaban en el comité obrero en su fábrica que ha estado luchando contra la reducción de los sobresueldos.

Su campaña fue completamente independiente de cualquier otro partido o grupo. Los principales problemas locales sobre los cuales centraron su campaña fueron la asistencia médica gratuita para todos; vivienda barata; una buena educación gratuita para todos, poniendo fin a los privilegios especiales para las escuelas particulares; y servicio de agua y gas para los barrios pobres. En sus discursos pronunciados en reuniones obreras, pudieron denunciar la emergencia, desenmascarar el programa de veinte puntos de Gandhi, y denunciar las reducciones en los sobresueldos, explicando como se debería de luchar en contra de ello.

La Communist League publicó además un folleto desenmascarando al Janata Morcha y al Congress Party, así como al PCI y el PCM. Hicieron su campaña a favor de reducir el límite de los gastos electorales, a favor de que se hagan públicos los gastos electorales y las fuentes del presupuesto electoral, por el derecho a la destitución, y por una representatividad proporcional.

La Communist League sólo recibió poco más del 1% del voto, pero puso el ejemplo al ofrecer un alternativa de clase.

P. Mencionaste que había una lucha alrededor del problema de las reducciones de los sobresueldos. ¿Se limita esto a la fábrica que mencionaste?

R. No, de ninguna manera. Aunque no se da a un nivel muy amplio, es un proceso muy importante que se empieza a desarrollar, al menos en algunos lugares que conocemos.

En Gujarat, aunque la clase media urbana, incluyendo a los empleados asalariados, era hostil a la emergencia desde el principio, no sucedió lo mismo con la clase obrera. En realidad, los obreros en general no habían apoyado el anterior ascenso de masas en Gujarat (así como en otras partes no habían apoyado generalmente el movimiento de J.P. Narayan).

Cuando se declaró la emergencia, la clase obrera y los pobres en las ciudades estaban un poco ilusionados con ella, y pensaban que les podría salvar de la corrupción, el

nepotismo y la inflación, como Indira Gandhi había prometido. Hubo una gran propagandización sistemática por parte del gobierno central, prometiendo reprimir a los contrabandistas y los estraperlistas, y anunciando el programa de veinte puntos como un beneficio para todos. Al principio los obreros fueron engañados.

Pero a medida que pasaba el tiempo, los precios seguían subiendo, hubo despidos masivos, no hubo aumentos salariales, y para el colmo, se dieron las reducciones de los sobresueldos. Ya en septiembre, los obreros empezaban a ver claramente la situación. Empezaban a ver que la emergencia servía los intereses de los "ricos" contra los "pobres." Se empezaron a disipar las ilusiones y el temor.

Mientras que los burócratas sindicales tomaron la posición de hacer protestas verbales, pero sin hacer nada, la Communist League llamó a las organizaciones obreras a luchar contra las reducciones de los sobresueldos. Propusieron la formación de frentes únicos y comités de acción. Fueron a puerta de fábrica, a las grandes fábricas de tejidos en Baroda. Explicaron el carácter de clase capitalista del gobierno central de Indira Gandhi y del gobierno estatal del Janata Morcha en Gujarat. Condenaron la emergencia y las reducciones de los sobresueldos. Y propusieron amplios comités de acción para luchar contra estas reducciones.

Los obreros respondieron parcialmente a estos llamados. Se llevaron a cabo grandes mítines a puerta de fábrica, con la participación de unos 100 o 200 y hasta 700 obreros (casi un turno entero). En un caso, casi 1,000 obreros de una fábrica de tejido vinieron a un mitin para discutir su estrategia de lucha. Los obreros pasaron por alto el sindicato inútil y establecieron un comité obrero que logró algunas victorias: un sobresueldo del 4% en efectivo y 4% adicional en bienes; incrementos salariales del 100% según los aumentos en el costo de la vida, a diferencia del 90% que se pagaba anteriormente en Baroda; y un descuento sobre la compra de ropa.

Estos son sólo pequeños ejemplos, y hasta el momento son los únicos ejemplos en todo Gujarat, pero dan una idea del cambio que se está dando en el sentimiento de la clase obrera y demuestran que existe el potencial que sólo necesita una buena dirección.

P. ¿Cuáles son, según tu, las perspectivas para el futuro en la India?


R. Si no se da un gran cambio en la relación de fuerzas, no existe ninguna posibilidad de un retorno a la situación que existía antes de junio de 1975—en el sentido de que no existirán para el pueblo los derechos fundamentales que tenía antes (por supuesto, aún esos derechos eran muy limitados).

El derecho a la revisión judicial no será restaurado en su forma original. El problema de los presos políticos existirá por mucho tiempo. Se dio una oportunidad para luchar alrededor del problema de las reducciones de los sobresueldos, pero desafortunadamente los grandes partidos obreros y los sindicatos no trataron de aprovechar esa oportunidad. Así pues, el régimen de Gandhi ha sido estabilizado a nivel nacional.

Las demandas democráticas cobrarán más importancia, demandas como: libertad para los presos políticos, el levantamiento de la emergencia, el levantamiento de la precensura, el levantamiento de la prohibición de los partidos políticos, la eliminación de todas las leyes represivas. Además, la revocación de las leyes contra la clase obrera tales como el congelamiento parcial de los salarios y la reducción de los sobresueldos, el reconocimiento de los sindicatos disidentes.

Las demandas como éstas tendrán que formar gran parte de la actividad de la izquierda. Y sólo las movilizaciones independientes de la clase obrera y las masas trabajadoras las podrán conseguir. □

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El Movimiento Campesino en el Perú Hoy en Día



Hugo Blanco se dirige a un mitin en La Convención.

[La siguiente entrevista con Hugo Blanco apareció en el número del 4 de diciembre del semanario peruano, *Marka*.]

* * *

¿Qué cambios encuentra en la situación del campesinado?

Yo he vuelto al Cuzco después de 13 años de ausencia, y he notado grandes cambios. Los hacendados, como tales, prácticamente han desaparecido. Sin embargo, paralelamente a esto se nota que el campesino sigue viviendo en la misma miseria de antes. Esto es una contradicción aparente. Cuando uno conversa más profundamente con los campesinos, se da cuenta que ha cambiado su forma de explotación. Antes, era una explotación más tipo feudal y ahora es una explotación de tipo capitalista. Ahora, la lucha del campesinado es una lucha contra el capitalismo y contra el Estado capitalista.

Yo creo que ahora la consigna fundamental ya no es "Tierra o Muerte" como entonces, sino "Socialismo o Muerte."

¿Cuál es su punto de vista sobre la dirigencia y el program de la CCP?

En cuanto a la centralización campesina, al llegar al Perú a pesar de las discrepan-

cias que había con los cc. dirigentes de la CCP en algunos puntos, les manifesté directamente que a mí me parecía que la CCP era la más grande e importante organización centralizadora que haya tenido el campesinado peruano en toda su historia. Esto es indudable. Han habido épocas más explosivas que ésta; por ejemplo, la época 62-63, pero en cuanto a organización y centralización, nunca el campesinado ha contado con un organismo de este tipo.

Nosotros los trotskistas apoyamos a la CCP por dos razones de principio. Una de ellas, porque es una organización independiente, y eso es fundamental. No hacemos cuestiones sobre la posición política que tenga la CCP. Nuestra crítica fundamental a la CNA² no es por apoyar al Gobierno sino *por depender del Gobierno*. Por principio no podemos estar en una organización estatizada. En cambio en una organización que dependa de las bases, podremos discrepar de su dirección pero discutiremos allí dentro. Un punto discrepante sí he tocado, es el carácter de nuestra revolución, la que es socialista para nosotros.

Sobre lo de Cuzco:

Mientras que a la Liga Agraria de Lares le habían puesto mi nombre, en el Cuzco se estaba diciendo que yo estaba en Sinamos³

y con la FARTAC.⁴ Ahora la FARTAC y el Sinamos están diciendo a los campesinos que desde que he ido al extranjero me he puesto de acuerdo con los yanquis para entregarle la tierra a los hacendados. Por otra parte, la ultraizquierda y algunos dirigentes que nos habían combatido en la época de la Convención (58-63), ahora nos atacan de Sinameros, acusan a la CCP de hacer lo mismo y de servir al Gobierno, etc.

O sea que en el campesinado cuzqueño hay dos fuerzas divisionistas. Una, el gobiernismo que, con el dinero del Sinamos, monta organizaciones artificiales. Y otra, la ultraizquierda, que trata de dirigir una organización y si no lo puede hacer se abre de ella y hace su "confederacioncita" con 5 campesinos y cinco estudiantes que hablan quechua. Estamos confiados que esas bases campesinas sabrán derrotar esas dos fuerzas divisionistas.

En la etapa actual, donde la reacción desarrolla una ofensiva anticomunista y el gobierno forma un frente de defensa, ¿cuál es su opinión sobre el objetivo de conformar un frente antimperialista?

Se habla de las amenazas de la ultraderecha. Se ve la ofensiva de Equis, Oiga, y todas esas revistas, pero yo creo que la lucha por la defensa de los intereses de las masas y la lucha contra las amenazas del golpe de la derecha, van por el mismo camino. O sea la lucha contra la amenaza golpista significa luchar por la amnistía general, por la defensa de las reivindicaciones económicas y las libertades democráticas del pueblo. El hecho de que el gobierno mantenga su política antidemocrática y continúe reprimiendo al pueblo, favorece a la derecha golpista. Y si hay un golpe será porque el gobierno tendió la cama para ese golpe.

La experiencia histórica demuestra que los gobiernos burgueses prefieren ser eliminados por otro gobierno burgués más reaccionario, que permitir que las masas avancen y se radicalicen. Pero eso no significa que debamos ser sectarios contra la gente que sigue al gobierno y que cree en las cosas que éste dice. Debemos plantearle a esta gente, puntos de vista que podamos conseguir juntos. Se esta gente cree que todos los problemas se deben a elementos infiltrados, que nos ayuden, pues, a conseguir y mantener las libertades democráticas.

Por otra parte, debemos superar la etapa sectaria para la constitución de frente,

1. Confederación Campesina del Perú.—IP

2. Confederación Nacional Agraria.—IP

3. Sistema Nacional de Apoyo a la Movilización Social, un aparato burocrático establecido por el gobierno para controlar el movimiento de masas.—IP

4. Federación Agraria Revolucionaria "Túpac Amaru II" del Cuzco.—IP

donde cada partidito o grupo quiere imponer su programa a otros grupos y quiere mantener el hegemonismo en desmedro del Frente. Mucho más correcto es ir comenzando por dos o tres puntos. Por ejemplo, la CCP está ahora planteando la Amnistía General, o sea, libertad para los presos políticos sociales, reincorporación para los despedidos, corte de juicios. Todos los que estamos de acuerdo con estos tres puntos, marchemos juntos. Es mejor plantear lo común, no pretender que todos comulguen con posiciones de otros, ya que esto terminará por crear tantos frentes como partidos existan. Esto no quiere decir que no exista debate ideológico y claridad política. La CCP está haciendo una acción de frente en forma no sectaria y espero que esto continúe así. La unión de todas las fuerzas se irá dando, desde estos puntos iniciales, a otros

puntos, en la medida en que la dinámica de la lucha vaya impulsando el frente.

Respecto al Frente de Defensa de la Revolución, a mi parecer, es una organización para defender las posiciones del gobierno en bloque, tanto contra sus enemigos de la derecha como contra las masas. Si el FDR fuera, por ejemplo, para la defensa de las 200 millas⁵ o para que las cosas que fueron nacionalizadas no sean devueltas o para que las haciendas no sean devueltas a los hacendados, me parece que mi partido debiera estar en ese frente. Pero no es eso. Al entrar al FDR hay que estar de acuerdo hasta con los tanques que hayan atacado a Querecotillo, con toda la política del gobierno en globalidad. □

5. Límite territorial de 200 millas.—IP

DOCUMENTOS

La Creciente Crisis de la Dictadura Franquista

[La siguiente declaración fue emitida el 15 de enero por el Comité Central de la Liga Comunista, organización simpatizante de la Cuarta Internacional en España.]

1. Los acontecimientos anteriores a la muerte de Franco (movilización contra las penas de muerte, Sahara, agudizaban ya de manera decisiva la crisis del Régimen. La desaparición del Dictador, *institución clave* y *aglutinante* de todos los clanes del franquismo, agravará de manera cualitativa esta crisis mortal y acelerará de forma imparable las tensiones entre las "familias" del Régimen, dislocando completamente su frágil equilibrio.

2. El Gobierno que no ha presentado aún a las Cortes su Declaración programática, ha dejado traslucir claramente sus posiciones. El fraude del "sistema bi-cameral" de Fraga, la exclusión "del terrorismo, el comunismo y el separatismo," el "futuro sindical" en condena abierta de las Comisiones Obreras, el discurso económico de Villar Mir, marcan patentemente los límites de este Gobierno. Demuestran con claridad su carácter *continuista* y *antidemocrático*, que los burgueses de la oposición tratan de enmascarar.

3. El nuevo Gobierno de Arias es el *más débil* de toda la historia del franquismo. Sin haber conseguido dar un solo paso en la cacareada "institucionalización" y confrontado con la crisis económica mayor de los últimos años, se enfrenta al potente ascenso de un movimiento de masas al que no ha logrado imponer ningún serio retroceso.

El anterior Gobierno necesitaba contar en su periferia con grupos como Fedisa para embellecer su apariencia y sus planes. La tremenda debilidad del actual, que guarda en cartera ataques aún más brutales contra los trabajadores y el pueblo, se ve obligado a hacer jugar este sucio papel a personajes como Ruiz Giménez y Tierno Galván, que se disfrazan de "socialistas" y "socializantes" para mejor engañar al proletariado y los oprimidos. Estos sectores burgueses de la "oposición democrática," defensores de dar una tregua al Gobierno continuista, en espera de sus hechos, llevan esta política a través de la Junta y la Plataforma de Convergencia Democrática al PCE [Partido Comunista Español], PSOE [Partido Socialista Obrero Español] y demás partidos obreros que integran estos organismos burgueses.

En realidad, *la única posibilidad de que el Gobierno pueda dar un solo paso serio en sus planes, es esta tregua que los partidos obreros consigan imponer a trabajadores y oprimidos.*

La debilidad del Gobierno, al que se puede considerar como la *expresión política del cambio en la correlación de fuerzas* entre las clases a favor del proletariado, forjada en los últimos tiempos, crea mejores condiciones para la lucha del movimiento obrero.

El Gobierno se encuentra imposibilitado en lo inmediato para impedir, sin desenmascararse abiertamente, que el movimiento de masas imponga una limitada legalidad de *hecho* para sus acciones.

4. El Gobierno es absolutamente incapaz de detener el avance del movimiento de

masas hacia el derrocamiento de la Dictadura. Cualquier "reforma demagógica" que realice no puede tener otras consecuencias que azuzar hacia adelante a los trabajadores y oprimidos y agudizar las contradicciones entre los clanes franquistas. No podemos descartar tampoco la posibilidad, ahora improbable, de pasos atrás bajo la presión de los sectores ultra de la Dictadura, cuya influencia en absoluto se puede menospreciar por su papel decisivo en las instituciones del régimen y del que el Gran capital no puede prescindir, aunque esta salida tiene el inconveniente de que sin hacer retroceder decisivamente la lucha de masas, cree una mayor respuesta de masas a escala estatal e internacional.

5. Frente a la "evolución" de los Fraga y frente a la "ruptura" democrática que busca ganar a sectores de la Dictadura, defendiendo un programa que mantiene lo fundamental de ella, los trotskystas reafirmamos más que nunca que la única vía para derrocar al franquismo coronado es la de la Huelga General. Que hoy existen mejores condiciones que nunca para avanzar hacia ella. Las últimas luchas demuestran claramente la posibilidad del paso a la acción directa de las masas contra la Dictadura.

Hay que pasar a la ofensiva contra el franquismo rompiendo toda tregua. Hacia el derrocamiento de la Dictadura por la Huelga General. Por la destrucción total del franquismo que permita las elecciones libres a Asamblea Constituyente basada en las Asambleas Nacionales Constituyentes de los distintos pueblos oprimidos. Por el Gobierno Provisional de los trabajadores capaz de convocarla y de satisfacer las más urgentes necesidades y aspiraciones de los oprimidos.

Esta es la exigencia que se plantea a todos los partidos obreros; por ello llamamos a crear un Pacto de Clase de todos ellos para el impulso a través de CCOO (Comisiones Obreras) de esos objetivos. □

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